
NINTENDO GAMECUBE • GBA • N5
NGC
ISSUE #90
FEBRUARY 2004 / £3.50
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THE LEGEND RETURNS ON GBA
NFL STREET
MADDEN GONE MAD
FIRST REVIEW!
DONKEY KONGA
NINTENDO'S WILD DRUM-'EM-UP!
JAMES BOND 007
Exclusive hands-on verdict
METAL GEAR
Twin Snakes blown apart
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BINGO BONGO

It's cold, it's deadline and all I can hear is boomf-boomf-*clack*-boomf-*clack-clack*-buddabuddabudda-boomf. (Mambo No.5 through the magic of Nintendo's drum kit and Geraint's warm Welsh hands – as if you didn't know…) Any other game, played at this time of the month *at this volume* over and over again would warrant an immediate shattering. But… *Donkey Konga's* surprisingly therapeutic. It's also a masterful four-player experience and a genuine eye-magnet (we've lost track of the amount of passers-by rubbernecking at what is essentially a bunch of dots zipping across the screen). You'll want to dismiss it as a novelty, but you'll be hooked as soon as you clamp the bongos between your knees… Forget Nintendo mags that don't seem to like playing Nintendo games – this is the sort of experience **NGC** lives for.

Hawkins
marcus.hawkins@futurenet.co.uk



TURN TO PAGE 50
For the **NGC** verdict on this month's biggest game…

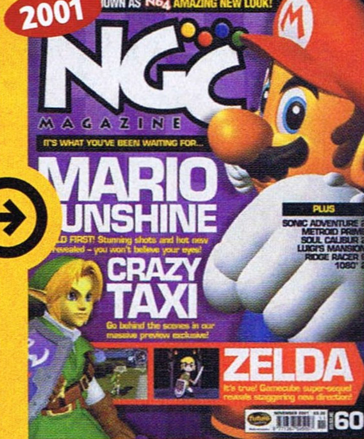
SUBSCRIBE TODAY!
Go to page 110, where for a small amount of cash you can get three free issues and a free joypad. No excuses!

TURN OVER THE PAGE!
To see exactly how much stuff we've jammed into this issue of ***NGC!***

WHY WE'RE No.1 FOR NINTENDO

NGC's the result of over a decade of gaming genius – so you're the best-informed Nintendo gamer around.





■ In the beginning… there was Super Play. Dedicated to the SNES, it changed videogame magazines forever.

■ As the N64 became the choice of real game fans, Super Play made way for the mighty N64 Magazine.

■ From issue 60, N64 transformed into **NGC** – the ultimate hit for true Nintendo fans!

NGC'S FIVE STAR GUIDE TO WHAT'S UNMISSABLE THIS ISSUE!



DONKEY KONGA

SMASH HIT! Exclusive review of a new kind of beat-'em-up.

MARIO KART TIPS

Win every time – and beat those pesky Staff Ghosts into the bargain. You're-a gonna weeeen!

DONKEY KONGA

"ANYONE, NO MATTER WHAT THEIR GAMING TASTE, WILL HAVE FUN WITH THIS"

MEET ENJiKi

Enjiki went to all the trouble of importing Donkey Konga, then let her housemate Pinkjiki have a go. Oh dear. Pinkjiki's quite a tough nut – forget Lita and Torrie Wilson, she could make The Rock cry. Anyway, now our mascot has the software but not the bongos, because Pinkjiki stuck her ham-like mitts through them. Brains of a drummer, both of those girls. Get back to introducing the mag, Enjiki.



WHAT'S IN NGC?

It's the start of the year so things are slow on the first look front – but new releases are pouring out.

PREVIEWS

Nearly here… but you'll have to wait a tiny bit longer.

NEWS

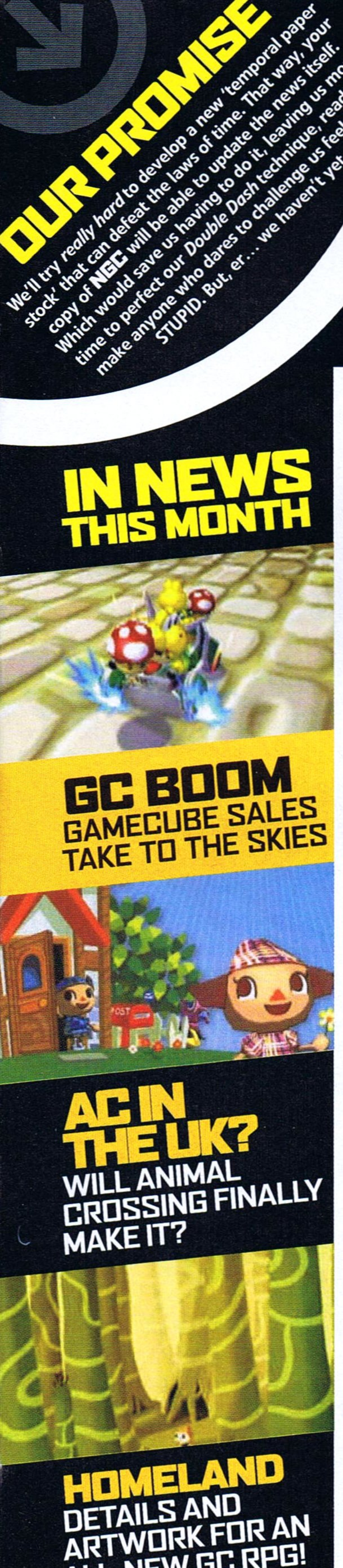
In-depth news, not pointless rumours.

EXTENDED PLAY

Squeezing all the fun from the gaming toothpaste tube.

REVIEWS

Who needs money? Exchange it for some of these…



NGC BRINGING YOU NEWS FIRST

NEWSDESK







GC TAKES THE US BY STORM

GAMECUBE SALES EXPLODE IN THE LAND OF THE FREE – AND IT LOOKS LIKE EUROPE MAY BE NEXT IN LINE TO FEEL THE IMPACT



Thank Heavens for Thanksgiving. The US holiday season has seen Gamecube and Game Boy Advance take the lion's share of gamers looking for a new console. For the month of November, Gamecube sold a remarkably high three-quarters of a million units, alongside a staggering 1.3 million units for the Game Boy Advance. To put this into perspective, Microsoft's Xbox, Nintendo's nearest rival in the States, only managed to sell 491,000 units (admittedly still a healthy total).

> **"MARIO KART SOLD HALF A MILLION COPIES, MAKING IT THE BIGGEST-SELLER OF THE SEASON"**

Thanks to the meteoric rise in Nintendo's hardware sales that month, Nintendo's stocks rose 3.7%, with investors being encouraged to buy shares in the company – a mild antidote to last month's news that Nintendo had posted their first loss since the company went public in the late 1960s. Nintendo's success during this season was cemented with the announcement that *Mario Kart: Double Dash* had sold half a million copies, making it the biggest selling game of the season – and that's no mean feat when you consider that the game had only actually been on sale for two weeks of the month.

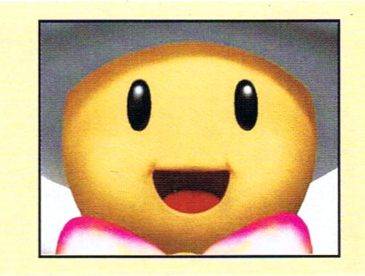
A clear indication, then, that gamers are more than willing to adopt the Gamecube now that the price is right. Whether or not Nintendo can expect the same kind of reaction in Europe remains to be seen, but given that after the price cut Nintendo saw similar activity over here to that which occurred in the States, they should be pretty confident that this Christmas will see a drastic improvement in sales.



NEW YEAR GIVEAWAY!

We've amassed a collection of brand-new games, and over the next three pages we're going to give them away, so if Santa disappointed you, this might be the solution. Once you've answered all four questions, write them on a postcard and send them to **NEW YEAR GIVEAWAY, NGC Magazine, 30 Monmouth St, Bath, BA1 2BW.**

Winners with the correct answers will be drawn out of the hat on 30th February. Editor's decision is final.



ANIMAL CROSSING FOR EUROPE?

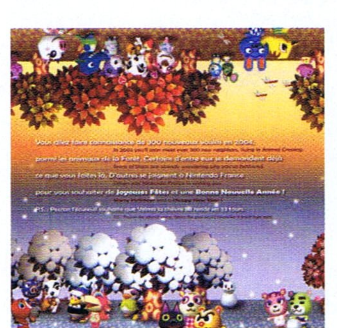
COULD IT REALLY BE? COULD NINTENDO HONESTLY BE CONSIDERING BRINGING EU GAMERS WHAT THEY WANT?



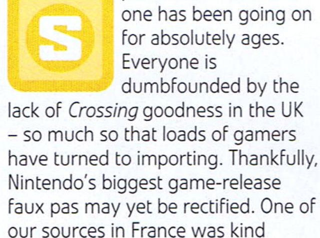
△ Ah, the sweet, sweet artwork of *Animal Crossing* – last month its non-appearance in the UK proved to be your biggest gripe with Nintendo of Europe…



△ …but now it seems as though our collective prayers have been answered. A little late, mind you. Anyone who wants it simply has to import it from Australia.



△ Could this really be hinting at a forthcoming announcement?



Speculation about this one has been going on for absolutely ages. Everyone is dumbfounded by the lack of *Crossing* goodness in the UK – so much so that loads of gamers have turned to importing. Thankfully, Nintendo's biggest game-release faux pas may yet be rectified. One of our sources in France was kind enough to give us the heads-up on a Christmas card that Nintendo France sent out, the artwork on which, looks very familiar…

The card reads, "In 2004 you'll soon meet over 300 new neighbours living in Animal Crossing. Some of them are already wondering why you've bothered. Others join Nintendo France in wishing you Merry Holidays and a Happy New Year." Hardly confirmation of release, but surely there must be a reason for the *Animal Crossing*-themed card. Our French source had this to add. "I wouldn't read too much into it if I were you. We were visiting Nintendo France just days ago and they said nothing to us about the game, which is strange because we know they've been desperate to get [Animal Crossing] out since the Gamecube launched. Maybe it is a precursor to an announcement, but then it could just be their little way of letting Nintendo Japan know how much they want it… alternatively, it could just be that they were looking for a Christmassy image for their card…" We'll wait and see.

> "A SOURCE IN FRANCE GAVE US THE HEADS-UP ON A CHRISTMAS CARD THAT NINTENDO FRANCE SENT OUT"

SHORT CUTS



PANASONIC Q CEASES PRODUCTION

Due to a massive decrease in demand for the machine, Panasonic (Matsushita in Japan) have decided to discontinue their stylish DVD/Gamecube hybrid. One of the gaming world's most desirable pieces of kit, the gorgeous blue-neon-lit mirror-fronted system has seen a decline in sales thanks to recent GC price cuts. Rather than slash the price of the unit (thus eating into their profits) Matsushita have decided to halt production. So if you want one, we suggest you buy one now before it's too late.

IQUE SELLING WELL?

Early indications show that Nintendo's N64 controller unit (see pages 28-29) is selling well in China, although there are no specific figures available as yet. Nintendo are looking to increase its penetration through 'thousands of stores' across the country. The release of Sony's PS2 console in China was stopped at the last minute due to piracy issues.

UBI SOFTWARE

To win one of five sets of all three of Ubi Soft's superb titles, *XIII*, *BG&E* and *Prince of Persia*, just answer the following question:

Who's the creator of Beyond Good and Evil AND which Ubi Soft platform hero is he famous for?



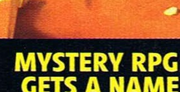
GBA SP CASES

Courtesy of Proporta.com, we've got four lovely metal GBA SP cases to give away. The units are light, sleek in design and your SP fits firmly and snugly inside for the ultimate protection. We've actually thrown a GBA SP down the stairs in one to test them out, and the unit came away completely unscathed. So they're actually very good. Oh yes. They're not available in the shops so you'll have to answer this question to get one.

True or False. GBA has sold over 10 million units across Europe?



SHORT CUTS



MYSTERY RPG GETS A NAME

We've actually known about this for quite a while now, but into the absence of of any concrete details, we thought we'd hold back for a little while. The game in question is developed by Chun Soft as one of three projects to celebrate the company's 20th anniversary. The RPG will go by the name of *Homeland* and follows the story of a young boy and girl who fall into a strange world after being led there by a strange voice. So far only artwork has been on show, but we've been told that the game's visuals follow the same distinctive 'Moomins' style. Intriguing.



△ Mario. Immortalised in Wax. Well, when we say 'immortalised' that depends on whether or not anyone's cruel enough to melt him down into a giant candle.

MARIO IS KING

THE IRREPRESSIBLE POWER OF THE PORTLY PLUMBER...

There was a time, or so they say, when Mario was a 'more recognisable character than Mickey Mouse'. It would be hard to say that that level of fame has been sustained over the years – something that's since given way to the likes of Sega's Sonic the Hedgehog, Nintendo's own Pokémon and Lara Croft. However, recently released statistics by Nintendo show that Mario is still a force to be reckoned with.

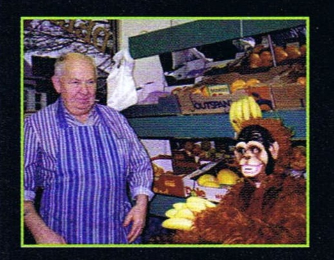
To date, Nintendo's plumber mascot has appeared in in no less than 67 different games (which, bizarrely, isn't quite as many as Capcom's Mega Man) and has been responsible for the sale of a phenomenal 170,000,000 units of Mario-themed software. That's a whopping 7.4 million pieces of software a year!

On a slightly unrelated although quite similar note, as reported a couple of months back in **NGC**/88, Mario has finally been immortalised at the Hollywood Wax Museum (the Californian equivalent of Madame Tussauds) at the expense of Neo and Trinity from The Matrix Revolutions. The wax statue was commissioned in celebration of the release of the excellent *Mario and Luigi: Superstar Saga*. The effigy of the plumber currently stands proud in the museum lobby. Go Mario! Etc, etc...

VIRTUAL REALITY *YOU!*

NINTENDO GAMING MOMENTS 'COME TRUE'.

THIS MONTH Beauty and the Beast. Your Kong 'n' Peach pics.



MONKEY MAGIC

Top effort from Cheam's James Nichols, and in a 'proper' grocers too. See what he did there, guys?



NO ROOM AT THE INN

Dave Pugh from Essex, dressed as the Virgin Mary in his mum's curtains? We bet you feel really proud.



FROM ASS...

Matthew Pellet needs to get out more. You know. Without having to resort to dressing up as a woman.



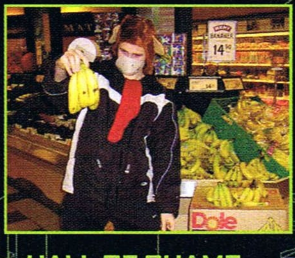
...TO PURE CLASS

This, on the other hand, is pure genius. Although admittedly, he's looking more 'Wookie' than 'Kong'.



THE OFFICIAL NGC...

First up, Ewan McKenzie from Dumfries. What in the name of Mazza are you doing? Just look at him.



...HALL OF SHAME

Aargh! A shell-suit, red sock, limp wrist and mad stance does not a Kong make, Andreas Nakkerud.

SEGA TRIO UP FOR GRABS...

We've got five sets of Sega's *Billy Hatcher, Sonic DX* and *Worms 3D* to give away – answer this question and enter the draw:

In which year was the first addictive Worms game from Team 17 released?

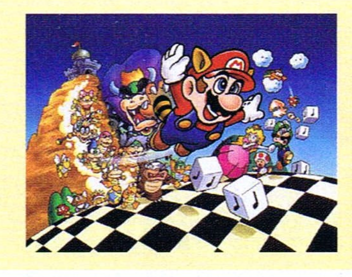


SUPER MARIO ADVANCE 4

Or rather, *Super Mario Bros 3* to anyone who's not playing it for the first time on GBA.

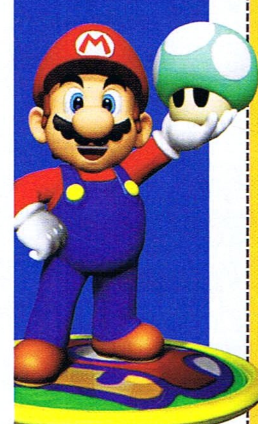
Nintendo have kindly sent us five copies of the excellent GBA Mario classic for you to win. All you have to do for a chance to nab one for yourself is answer the following question.

In his first-ever appearance, Mario was named Jumpman. We want to know this: who was 'Mario' renamed after and what was that 'Mario's' relationship to Nintendo?



2003 READER AWARDS

As is customary, following on from last month's 2003 review, we turn the power of judgement over to you, the loyal reader. We've provided a simple form for you to fill in. Tell us your highlights and lowlights of the past gaming year.



VOTE TODAY!

Your vote counts! Choose your 2003 Gamecube highlights and lowlights – you can make a difference!

GAME OF THE YEAR
You know. Your favourite game. Of the Year.

I VOTE FOR ....

BEST FIRST-PARTY GAME
Your favourite offering from the big 'N'.

I VOTE FOR ....

BEST THIRD-PARTY GAME
Capcom, Activision, Ubi-Soft… you know, those 'other' developers.

I VOTE FOR ....

BEST SPORTS TITLE
Your favourite exercise simulator.

I VOTE FOR ....

BEST ADVENTURE
The year's most unbeatable journey is…

I VOTE FOR ....

BEST SHOOTER / ACTION GAME
Murder, Death, Kill. Which game had it all?

I VOTE FOR ....

BEST RACER
Going forwards fast, steering left and right. You know the type.

I VOTE FOR ....

BEST PLATFORMER
Jump, collect, bounce… jump, collect, bounce…

I VOTE FOR ....

BEST USE OF A LICENSE
Star Wars, Lord of the Rings, Harry Potter… the list is endless…

I VOTE FOR ....

BEST GBA GAME
The biggest hitter on the small screen…

I VOTE FOR ....

MOST UNDERRATED GAME
The cracking little gem that no-one else bought but you…

I VOTE FOR ....

BEST USE OF GRAPHICS
One day, ALL games will look like this… drool…

I VOTE FOR ....

BEST USE OF SOUND
NO, NO, NO! *Eternal Darkness* was a cracker, but it came out in 2002, numbnuts…

I VOTE FOR ....

BEST MULTIPLAYER GAME
The best party game of 2003.

I VOTE FOR ....

MOST ORIGINAL CONCEPT
It's crazy… but it might just work…

I VOTE FOR ....

MOST PLEASANT SURPRISE
You didn't think you'd like it but…

I VOTE FOR ....

BEST USE OF GBA LINK
Everyone's favourite 'waste of time'. Someone must use this. Surely?

I VOTE FOR ....

BEST HARDWARE PERIPHERAL
The GBA SP, Action Replay, Freeloader, GBA Player… you decide.

I VOTE FOR ....

WORST GAME OF THE YEAR
AAAARGH! The flush is there for a reason, pal! Anyone remember *Defender?* Or *Evolution Snowboarding?* Or *WWE Crush Hour?* Or… Go on – have some fun with this one…

I VOTE FOR ....

REMEMBER THESE?
Jog your memory with some 2003 hits…

METROID PRIME It's hard to believe the shooter-RPG-platformer only arrived this year.

WIND WAKER The best *Zelda* yet. So it can't win Most Underrated Game, no?

HITMAN 2 'The best mature title on Gamecube' we said. Do you agree?

VIEWTIFUL JOE Capcom innovate – do you appreciate? Er… y'know. Mmmm.

WARIO WARE, INC An unmissable GBA title. You didn't miss it, did you?

POKÉMON RUBY/SAPPHIRE Some GBA game about monsters, or something…

There's plenty more where they came from – get remembering and scribbling asap…

GET YOUR ENTRIES IN!

YOUR NAME ....
YOUR AGE ....
YOUR ADDRESS ....
....
....

Send you completed form to:
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Bath, BA1 2BW

If you don't want to ruin your copy of NGC, feel free to photocopy the form and send that in instead.



INDEPENDENT NINTENDO GAMING

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RINGTONES

Hip Hop+RnB		Poly	Mono
50 Cent	21 Questions	NGP 79236	NGM 43748
Jay Z	Excuse Me Miss	NGP 79011	NGM 43749
Pharell+Jay Z	Frontin	NGP 79662	NGM 43750
Sean Paul	Get Busy	NGP 79019	NGM 43751
Sean Paul	Gimmie The Light	NGP 77524	NGM 43752
Nelly	Hot In Herre	NGP 76299	NGM 43753
Nas	I Can	NGP 78158	NGM 43754
50 Cent	In Da Club	NGP 77949	NGM 43755
50 Cent	PIMP	NGP 79316	NGM 43756
Obie Trice	Got Some Teeth	NGP 74137	NGM 43757
Ja Rule	Thug Lovin	NGP 77960	NGM 43758
DMX	X Gon Give It To Ya	NGP 79012	NGM 43759
Blu Cantrell	Breathe	NGP 79290	NGM 43760
Outkast	Hey Ya	NGP 74403	NGM 43761
Sean Paul	Like Glue	NGP 79846	NGM 43762
Black Eyed Peas	Where is the Love?	NGP 79664	NGM 43763
Fatman Scoop	Be Faithful	NGP 74361	NGM 43764
Beyonce	Crazy In Love	NGP 79237	NGM 43765
R Kelly	Ignition	NGP 79043	NGM 43766
Dance			
Scooter	The Night	NGP 79241	NGM 43767
XTM	Fly On The Wings Of Love	NGP 79164	NGM 43768
Room 5	Make Luv	NGP 78859	NGM 43769
Scooter	Posse	NGP 77646	NGM 43770
Junior Senior	Move Your Feet	NGP 78107	NGM 43771
Fat Boy Slim	Right Here Right Now	NGP 79026	NGM 43772
UD Project	Summer Jam	NGP 72358	NGM 43773
Scooter	Weekend	NGP 78901	NGM 43774
Jaimeson	TRUE	NGP 77928	NGM 43775
Ganja Kru	Super Sharp Shooter	NGP 72859	NGM 43776
Kylie	Slow	NGP 75079	NGM 43777
Rock			
Linkin Park	Faint	NGP 79153	NGM 43700
Evanescence	Bring Me To Life	NGP 79119	NGM 43701
The Darkness	I Believe In A Thing Called Love	NGP 79744	NGM 43702
The Darkness	Growing On Me	NGP 79350	NGM 43703
Red Hot Chilli Peppers	Can't Stop	NGP 77945	NGM 43704
Red Hot Chilli Peppers	Fortune Faded	NGP 75312	NGM 43705
White Stripes	Seven Nation Army	NGP 78921	NGM 43706
QOTSA	No One Knows	NGP 77372	NGM 43707
Rage Against The Machine	Killing In The Name Of	NGP 78810	NGM 43708
Motorhead	Ace Of Spades	NGP 77103	NGM 43709
Metallica	Frantic	NGP 71025	NGM 43710
Limp Bizkit	Eat You Alive	NGP 71935	NGM 43711
Funeral For A Friend	Juneau	NGP 79759	NGM 43712
Guns N Roses	Sweet Child o Mine	NGP 72161	NGM 43713
Indie			
Coldplay	Clocks	NGP 78160	NGM 43714
Blur	Song 2	NGP 70690	NGM 43715
Oasis	Little by Little	NGP 77021	NGM 43716
Turin Brakes	Pain Killer	NGP 78067	NGM 43717
Radiohead	There There	NGP 79158	NGM 43718
Stone Roses	Fools Gold	NGP 70917	NGM 43719
Super Furry Animals	Golden Retriever	NGP 79547	NGM 43721
The Strokes	12:51	NGP 73219	NGM 43722
The Coral	Pass It On	NGP 79417	NGM 43723

Movies		
Mission Impossible	NGP 70111	NGM 43724
James Bond	NGP 70340	NGM 43725
Exorcist	NGP 70055	NGM 43726
Great Escape	NGP 70092	NGM 43727
Pulp Fiction	NGP 76877	NGM 43728
Rocky	NGP 70561	NGM 43729
The Godfather	NGP 70291	NGM 43730
Austin Powers	NGP 70321	NGM 43731
Halloween	NGP 75961	NGM 43732
The Good,The Bad+The Ugly	NGP 75252	NGM 43733
Beverly Hills Cop	NGP 77032	NGM 43734
TV		
Danger Mouse	NGP 76368	NGM 43735
Monty Python	NGP 73225	NGM 43736
Muppets	NGP 70114	NGM 43737
Only Fools+Horses	NGP 70117	NGM 43738
Banana Splits	NGP 76355	NGM 43739
Scooby Doo	NGP 76230	NGM 43741
Eminem		
Business	NGP 76328	NGM 43742
Cleaning Out My Closet	NGP 76327	NGM 43743
Lose Yourself	NGP 77915	NGM 43744
The Real Slim Shady	NGP 70609	NGM 43745
Sing For The Moment	NGP 76320	NGM 43746
Without Me	NGP 75782	NGM 43747

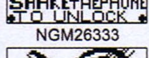
LOGOS



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NGM26331

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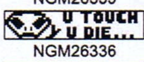
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NGM26334

SAS SNIPER DIVISION

NGM26335



NGM26336



NGM26337

NGM26338



NGM26339

EMINEM

NGM26340

Buffy

NGM26341

NGM26342

NGM26343

NGM26344

NGM26345

PHWOOOAR

NGM26346

PH@T

NGM26347

open 24 hours

NGM26348

loading...

NGM26349

REAL SOUND TONES

Human Sounds	
Dentist Drilling	NGP 75249
Suction Tube (Dentist)	NGP 75257
Game Show	NGP 72970
Fanfair	NGP 72968
Your File Is Done Scary	NGP 72953
Burp	NGP 79879
Long Fart	NGP 79880
Sports Sounds	
Car Speeding Up (Car Racing)	NGP 79984
Goooal	NGP 79962
Hand Clap	NGP 79963
Ohhh ! (Near Miss)	NGP 79966
Owzat ! (Cricket)	NGP 79992
Animal Sounds	
Chimp	NGP 79170
Dolphin	NGP 79172
Cuckoo	NGP 79198
Elephant	NGP 79174
Frog	NGP 79199
Monkey	NGP 79181
Pig Snort	NGP 79184
Rooster	NGP 79185
Wasp	NGP 79207
Lion Growl	NGP 79180
Whale	NGP 79189

JAVA GAMES



Nightmare Creatures™

Category: Beat'em All

Time to face your worst nightmare!

Phone Model	Game Code
Nokia 3100	NGGG 8594
Nokia 3300	NGGG 8291
Nokia 6100	NGGG 1569
Nokia 6610	NGGG 8821
Nokia 6800	NGGG 3801
Nokia 7210	NGGG 6958
Nokia 7250	NGGG 4522
Nokia 3510i	NGGG 4050
Nokia 5100	NGGG 8332

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XIII

Category: Action / Shooter

Will you penetrate the mystery?

Phone Model	Game Code
Nokia 3100	NGGG 2431
Nokia 3300	NGGG 2112
Nokia 3510i	NGGG 2953
Nokia 3650	NGGG 2331
Nokia 5100	NGGG 3410
Nokia 6100	NGGG 4183
Nokia 6610	NGGG 8415
Nokia 7210	NGGG 4041
Nokia 7250	NGGG 9985
Nokia 7650	NGGG 3562
Nokia N-Gage	NGGG 4068
Sagem My V-65	NGGG 2948
Sharp GX-10	NGGG 6384
Sharp GX-20	NGGG 2009

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Planet Zero™

Category: Shoot

A handful of chaos!

Phone Model	Game Code
Nokia 3100	NGGG 9330
Mokia 3300	NGGG 2820
Nokia 3410	NGGG 1394
Nokia 3510i	NGGG 8103
Nokia 3650	NGGG 7466
Nokia 5100	NGGG 1158
Nokia 6100	NGGG 8833
Nokia 6610	NGGG 1935
Nokia 6800	NGGG 5811
Nokia 7210	NGGG 6954
Nokia 7250	NGGG 4109
Nokia 7650	NGGG 8999
Nokia N-Gage	NGGG 9220
Sharp GX10	NGGG 8813
Siemens M50	NGGG 7337
Siemans M55	NGGG 1341
Siemans S55	NGGG 6296

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PICTURE MESSAGES

9999999999 missed calls

NGM86630



NGM86631



NGM86632

NGM86633



NGM86634

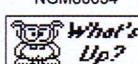


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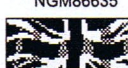


NGM86636

NGM86637



NGM86638

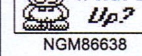


NGM86639



NGM86640

NGM86641



NGM86642





NGM86643



NGM86644

THIS PHONE IS STOLEN

NGM86645



NGM86646



NGM86647



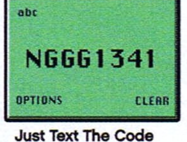
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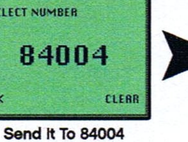
NGM86649

TO ORDER BY TEXT

(All products are available on selected phones please check Terms and conditions for compatibility)



Just Text The Code



Send It To 84004



Once Its Delivered Save It To Your Phone

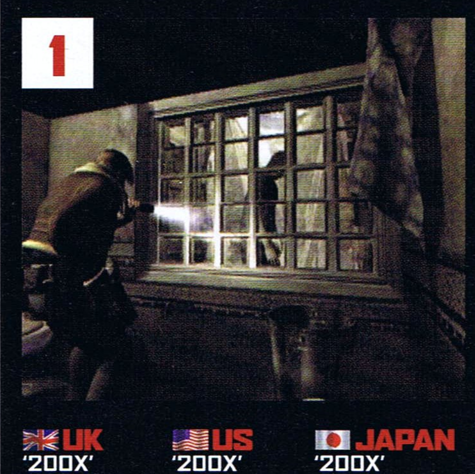
To order a mono tone or Java game text the item code to 84004 Eg. Text **NGGG 1341** to **84004**
To order a Real sound tone or Polyphonic tone text the item code followed by your phone manufacturer to 84004. Eg. TEXT **NGP 79170 NOKIA** to **84004**

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o Items can only be sent if your phone is on 02, T-Mobile, Vodafone or Orange network.
o You are able to access WAP services (for specific items that require WAP to be used to retrieve them to the mobile phone) or any related transmission system
By ordering via Premium Reverse Billed SMS ("PSMS") you agree to the order amount being charged directly to your mobile phone account. This amount will be deducted by your network operator at the time of ordering therefore you must ensure you have sufficient credit on your phone. When ordering via PSMS, you agree to incur any additional costs related to sending SMS messages to trigger the order. You must be 16 years or over to use this service.
For further information contact info@poptext.com
All downloads are provided by Inspired Broadcast Netoworks, 1-7 Livonia Street, London. WIF 8AD.

DISAGREE WITH MOST WANTED? Then email us at ngc@futurenet.co.uk or write to us at **NGC**, 30 Monmouth Street, Bath, BA1 2BW and tell us the three games you're most looking forward to. Every month, we'll tally up the scores on the doors and change the list accordingly.



Adding up the scores and accounting for taste, that's what this page does.



1 RESIDENT EVIL 4

UK '200X' | US '200X' | JAPAN '200X'

No change at the top this month – and that's not a great surprise. *Resi 4's* still one of the most anticipated games for the good people that put **NGC** together. Capcom are set to reveal more of the game at an event in the US at the end of January – as well as showing everyone exactly what *Killer 7's* all about too. Don't miss next issue, because we've got the scoop…



2 FINAL FANTASY: CC

UK MARCH | US FEB | JAPAN NOW

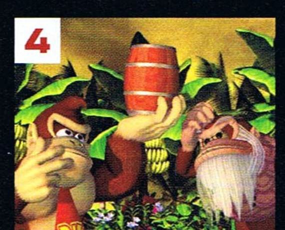
Not long to go before the fully-translated Western version arrives. It doesn't seem to have quite the sweeping story of previous *Final Fantasies*, being more of a straightforward monster-bash, but it really comes into its own with a friend…



3 POKÉMON COLOSSEUM

UK SPRING | US MARCH | JAPAN NOW

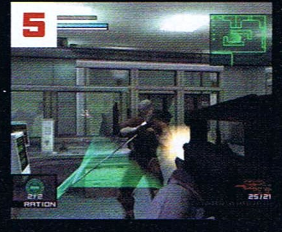
Springing up the charts thanks to our positive review last issue, *Colosseum* slaps a grown-up RPG on a *Pokémon Stadium*-style round of arena battles and comes up the better for it.



4 DONKEY KONGA

UK TBC | US TBC | JAPAN NOW

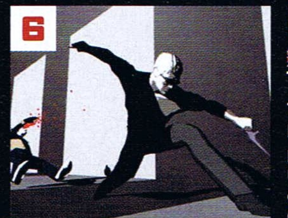
Mim's favourite game – even coming close to defeating *Mario Kart* in the race for her affections. Still no confirmation of a UK release – but when it comes, we're expecting big things. See p50 for the full run-down of what's hot about Nintendo's bongo-'em-up.



5 METAL GEAR SOLID

UK MARCH | US MARCH | JAPAN MARCH

Snake, Snake, *Snaaaaaaaake*… After pointing out last issue that no-one's played anything but an old jerky demo of the GC-exclusive *Twin Snakes*, we finally get to grips with the full game. Even if it *is* still a little jerky, it's shaping up to be very good indeed…



6 KILLER 7

UK TBC | US TBC | JAPAN TBC

The most adult-themed game to arrive on Nintendo's system. Bloke in a wheelchair projects seven different personalities, all of them hardcore killers. Looks great, if a little confusing – is it an FPS, an adventure, an..? Come back next issue to learn more.



7 JAMES BOND: E.O.N.

UK FEB | US FEB | JAPAN FEB

Ditching the sub-*GoldenEye* FPS action of previous entries in their series, EA switch to a third-person perspective for the fully-Brosnaned up *Everything or Nothing*. It all seems to work neatly as well – see our hands-on playtest on p24.



! PRINCE OF PERSIA

UK SPRING | US NOW | JAPAN TBC

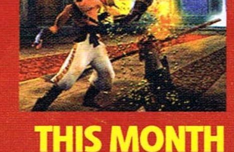
There seemed to be a strange exclusivity deal going on with this – only available on PS2 in the UK pre-Christmas, but freely available in the US on Gamecube. No matter, it's coming out here within a couple of months, and it's very, very good…



9 HARVEST MOON

UK MARCH | US JAN | JAPAN NOW

After all the bloodshed, murder and torture found in the likes of *Killer 7*, *Resi 4* and *Metal Gear*, it's nice to know you can settle back with a few hours gardening on Gamecube. You even get to sire a son, watch him grow and then fall in love. Gets you right *there*…



THIS MONTH

Do spend some time reading through Kittsy's bang-on-the-money import review of *Prince of Persia: The Sands of Time* (p66). That way, you can be first in the queue when it finally reaches UK shops, as you'll how good it is before anyone else.

#	Game	Description	UK	US	JAPAN
10	METROID PRIME 2	Much-anticipated sequel.	TBC	TBC	NOW
11	PSO III C.A.R.D	Reviewed this month.	TBC	TBC	NOW
12	SYMPHONIA	Namco's beautiful RPG.	TBC	SPRING	NOW
13	ZELDA: FOUR SWORDS	AKA *Zelda Four Swords Plus*.	TBC	TBC	TBC
14	PIKMIN 2	Release date slip king.	TBC	TBC	TBC
15	R: RACING EVOLUTION	Free *Pac-Man* and everything.	MARCH	NOW	NOW
16	SONIC HEROES	Team chase-'em-down.	SPRING	SPRING	SPRING
17	STARCRAFT: GHOST	Stealth and nuclear destruction.	2004	2004	TBA
18	MARIO TENNIS	Best thing ever. Probably.	TBC	TBC	TBC
19	PAC-MAN VS	Short, brilliant and free.	TBC	TBC	NOW
20	STARFOX 2	Arena based mash-'em-up.	TBC	TBC	TBC
21	SPIDER-MAN 2	*Grand Theft Auto* webslingin'.	SUMMER	SUMMER	TBC
22	UNITY	Music-based shooter.	TBC	TBC	TBC
23	GEIST	Spooky Nintendo FPS.	TBC	TBC	TBC
24	BEYOND GOOD & EVIL	Very French action-adventure.	SPRING	NOW	TBC
25	TETRA'S TRACKERS	GBA link up Zelda fun.	TBC	TBC	TBC

WRITE TO… MAILBOX/NGC/30 MONMOUTH STREET/BATH/BA1 2BW OR EMAIL NGC@FUTURENET.CO.UK

ULTRA RELEASE LIST

The latest on every Nintendo system game in development – updated monthly!

UK RELEASES

The most accurate listing available – although be aware that slippages can occur. All titles Gamecube unless otherwise stated.

JANUARY

16	Need for Speed Underground (GBA)	EA
30	Looney Tunes: Back in Action	EA
30	NFL Street	EA
30	Yu-Gi-Oh! The Secret Cards (GBA)	Konami
TBC	World Racing	TDK

FEBRUARY

6	Rogue Ops	Capcom
6	Urban Freestyle Soccer	Acclaim
20	Gotcha Force	Capcom
20	James Bond 007 in... Everything or Nothing	EA
20	James Bond 007 in... Everything or Nothing (GBA)	EA
26	Kirby's Air Ride	Nintendo
27	Harvest Moon 2: Friends of Mineral Town (GBA)	Ubi Soft
TBC	Fire Emblem (GBA)	Nintendo
TBC	Goblin Commander: Unleash the Horde	Jaleco
TBC	Jet Set Radio (GBA)	Sega/Atari
TBC	Puyo Pop Fever	Sega
TBC	Sonic Battle (GBA)	Sega/THQ
TBC	Space Channel 5 (GBA)	Sega/Atari
TBC	Sphinx & The Cursed Mummy	THQ
TBC	Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles	Konami

MARCH

5	Mario Golf: Toadstool Tour	Nintendo
5	Mario Golf: Advance Tour (GBA)	Nintendo
5	Pokémon Colosseum	Nintendo
5	Spawn: Armageddon	Namco/EA
11	Final Fantasy Crystal Chronicles	Nintendo
12	Disney's Aladdin (GBA)	Capcom
12	Disney's Hide & Sneak	Capcom
12	Prince of Persia: The Sands of Time	Ubi Soft
12	Sabrewulf (GBA)	THQ
18	Sword of Mana (GBA)	Nintendo
19	R: Racing Evolution	Namco/EA
26	Harvest Moon 2: It's a Wonderful Life	Ubi Soft
28	Bruce Lee: Return of the Legend (GBA)	Vivendi
TBC	Beyond Good & Evil	Ubi Soft
TBC	Boktai (GBA)	Konami
TBC	Metal Gear Solid: The Twin Snakes	Konami
TBC	Pitfall: The Lost Expedition	Activision
TBC	Pitfall: The Lost Expedition (GBA)	Activision
TBC	Scooby Doo! Mystery Mayhem	THQ
TBC	Tak & The Power of Juju	THQ
TBC	Tak & The Power of Juju (GBA)	THQ
TBC	Shining Force (GBA)	Sega/THQ

APRIL

TBC	Metroid: Zero Mission (GBA)	Nintendo
TBC	Pikmin 2	Nintendo
TBC	Pokémon Channel	Nintendo

MAY

7	Spider-Man 2	Activision
7	Spider-Man 2 (GBA)	Activision

TBC 2004

Animal Crossing 2	Nintendo
Arcade Treasures	Midway
Archer Maclean's 3D Pool (GBA)	Ignition
Area 51	Midway
Bad Boys II	Empire
Call of Duty: Finest Hour	Activision
The Cat in the Hat (GBA)	Vivendi
Custom Robo	Nintendo
Custom Robo GX (GBA)	Nintendo
Donkey Konga	Nintendo
Donkey Kong Country 2 (GBA)	Nintendo
Dragon's Lair 3D	THQ
ESPionage	Midway
Extreme Force	Namco
Fantastic Four	Activision
FIFA 2005	EA
Fight Night Boxing 2004	EA
F-Zero: Legend of Falcon (GBA)	Nintendo
Game Zero (Working Title)	Zoo
Geist	Nintendo
Good Cop Bad Cop	Revolution
Good Cop Bad Cop (GBA)	Revolution
Harry Potter and the Prisoner of Azkaban	EA
Hamtaro: Rainbow Rescue (GBA)	Nintendo
The Incredibles	THQ
The Incredibles (GBA)	THQ
Justice League	Midway
Killer 7	Capcom
Lemony Snicket	Activision
Lemony Snicket (GBA)	Activision
Madden NFL 2005	EA
Mario Tennis	Nintendo
Mario Tennis (GBA)	Nintendo
Mega Man Battle Network 4 (GBA)	Capcom
Mega Man X Command Mission	Capcom
Metroid Prime 2	Nintendo
Mission: Impossible Operation Surma	Atari
Mario & Donkey Kong (GBA)	Nintendo
Mortal Kombat 6	Midway
MTX Mototrax	Activision
NARC	Midway
NBA Live 2005	EA
NHL 2005	EA
NHL Hitz Pro	Midway
Nightmare Creatures	Ubi Soft
Nintendo Puzzle Collection	Nintendo
Pac-Man Vs	Nintendo/Namco
Phantasy Star Online Episode III: C.A.R.D. Revolution	Sega
Pool Paradise	Ignition
Resident Evil 4	Capcom
Roadkill	Midway
Robocop	Avalon
Scary Tales	Wanadoo
Shark's Tale	Activision
Shining Soul 2 (GBA)	Sega/THQ
Shrek 2	Activision
Shrek 2 (GBA)	Activision
Sonic Advance 3 (GBA)	Sega
Sonic Heroes	Sega
Sonic Pinball Party (GBA)	Sega
Splinter Cell: Pandora Tomorrow	Ubi Soft
Spy Hunter 2	Midway
Starcraft: Ghost	Vivendi
Starfox 2	Nintendo
Super Mario 128	Nintendo
Tales of Symphonia	Namco
Unity	Lionhead
Virtua Fighter Cyber Generation	Sega
Wario Ware Inc.	Nintendo
World Championship Pool 2004	Jaleco
X-Men Legends	Activision
Yu-Gi-Oh! Falsebound Kingdom	Konami
Zelda GC 2	Nintendo
Zelda: Tetra's Trackers	Nintendo
Zelda: The Four Swords	Nintendo

US RELEASES

The most important US releases. Fancy importing one?





JANUARY

- 20 **He-Man: Masters of the Universe** — TDK
- 27 **Freestyle Street Soccer** — Acclaim
- 29 **Bomberman Jetters** — Majesco

FEBRUARY

- 1 **Haven: Call of the King** — Xicat
- 9 **Final Fantasy Crystal Chronicles** — Nintendo
- 9 **Metroid: Zero Mission (GBA)** — Nintendo
- 9 **Trinity** — Activision
- 10 **James Bond 007 in… Everything or Nothing** — EA
- 15 **Mega Man X Command Mission** — Capcom
- 17 **FirstStrike: Grant City**
- **Anti-Crime** — Namco
- 20 **Mega Man Anniversary Collection** — Capcom
- 24 **Pitfall: The Lost Expedition** — Activision
- 28 **R-Type III: The Third Lightning (GBA)** — Destination Software

MARCH

- 1 **The Legend of Zelda: Four Swords Plus** — Nintendo
- 1 **Splinter Cell: Pandora Tomorrow** — Ubi Soft
- 2 **Mission: Impossible Operation Surma** — Atari
- 2 **MTX Mototrax** — Activision
- 2 **Phantasy Star Online Episode III: C.A.R.D. Revolution** — Sega

JAP RELEASES

The best future Japanese releases. Crazy great fun.





JANUARY

- 8 **Lord of the Rings: Ou no Kikan** — EA
- 15 **Kaijuu no Shima: Amazing Island** — Sega
- 22 **1080: Silver Storm** — Nintendo
- 22 **Sim People: Bustin' Out** — EA
- 23 **Gakuen Toshi Vara Noir Roses** — Idea Factory
- 22 **Gyakuten Saiban 3 (GBA)** — Capcom
- 29 **Bomberman Jetters (Hudson the Best)** — Hudson

FEBRUARY

- 12 **James Bond 007 in… Everything or Nothing** — EA
- 12 **Liliput Oukoku (GBA)** — Sega

MARCH

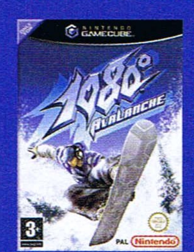
- 11 **Metal Gear Solid: The Twin Snakes** — Konami
- 24 **Puyo Pop Fever** — Sega

TBC 2004

- **BioHazard 4** — Capcom
- **Custom Robo** — Nintendo
- **Killer 7** — Capcom
- **Mario & Donkey Kong (GBA)** — Nintendo
- **Mario Tennis** — Nintendo
- **Metroid Prime 2** — Nintendo
- **Metroid: Zero Mission (GBA)** — Nintendo
- **Pikmin 2** — Nintendo
- **Starfox 2** — Nintendo/Namco

THESE JUST OUT!

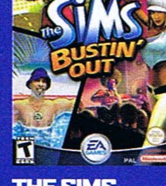
Missed last issue? Here's NGC's pick of the freshest games around…



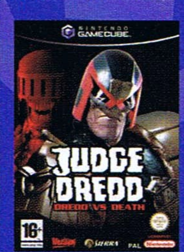
1080° AVALANCHE
NGC/89 ■ 90%
The choice of the discerning gamer who's looking for a more solid racing experience than *SSX*.



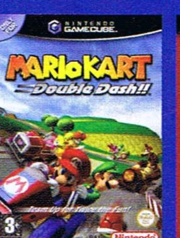
MARIO PARTY 5
NGC/89 ■ 80%
A brilliant multiplayer package (steer clear if you're a lone gamer) and one of the best *Mario Parties* yet.



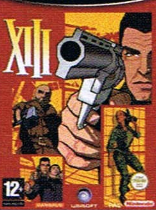
THE SIMS BUSTIN' OUT
NGC/89 ■ 82%
If you're after a leisurely, open-ended experience, we highly recommend you get this bigger sequel.



JUDGE DREDD DREDD VS DEATH
NGC/89 ■ 84%
A fast-paced, thrilling and bloody shooter with some neat ideas. A bit short, mind.



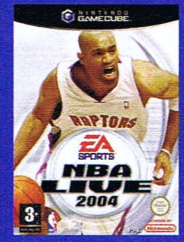
MARIO KART DOUBLE DASH
NGC/88 ■ 93%
Supreme multiplayer. Enhanced Grand Prix. Frustrating. Fun. In short, the best *Mario Kart* yet.



XIII
NGC/88 ■ 86%
An instantly recognisable, stylish and ambiguously big FPS which, despite the odd flaw, never fails to entertain.



METAL ARMS GLITCH IN THE SYSTEM
NGC/88 ■ 82%
An original, clever, comedy robot shoot-'em-up. An undiscovered gem.



NBA LIVE 2004
NGC/88 ■ 86%
Huge and immensely impressive basketball game that easily sees off other, lesser efforts. Good old EA.

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RURAL IDYLL

Farming's massively popular in Japan, perhaps because of the crowded, built-up nature of its cities. In fact, farmers in rural areas are now renting out fields for urban dwellers to go and work on at weekends. Townies get to feel dirt under their nails and enjoy the changing seasons, and the farmers get cheap labour. Everyone wins!

HARVEST MOON A WONDERFUL LIFE

NGC SPECIAL INVESTIGATION

Put down that shotgun. This is farming with not a burglar or cow's back passage in sight.



△ Little Lumina grows up as the game progresses, and her tunes change as she ages. Your son will eventually fall in love with either Lumina or Kate. Isn't that sweet?



You can just imagine the conversation when the first *Harvest Moon* was in development. "Here, wouldn't it be great to be a farmer? You could raise animals and meet ladies and do all sort of cool stuff." It just doesn't sound as exciting as being a busty archaeologist or special ops hero. However, several games and nearly a decade later, the *Harvest Moon* series is still going strong.

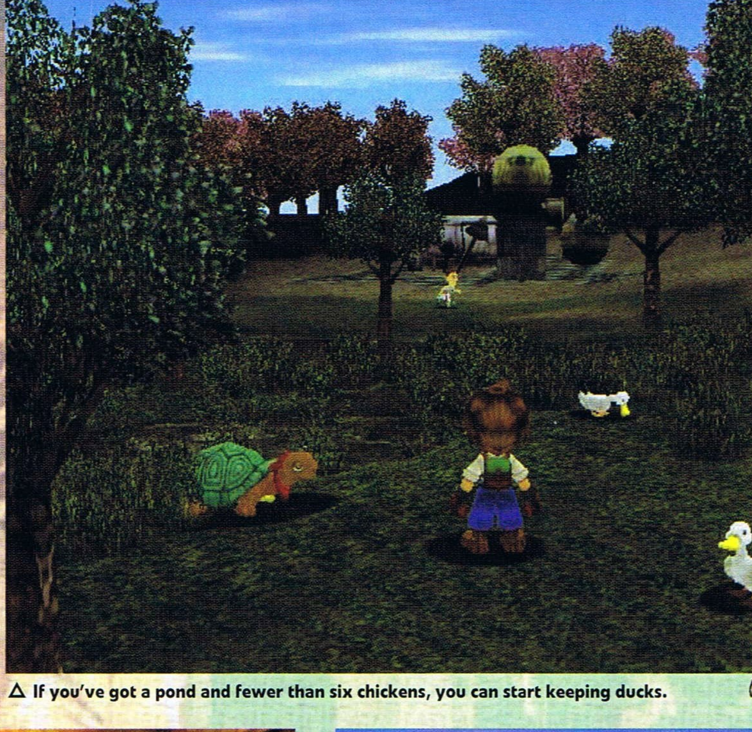
There are a few differences between the Gamecube game and its N64 predecessor. In *A Wonderful Life* you have to live through 30 years of game time, although you don't play every single year. The days are longer than in previous *Harvest Moons*, so you can do more in a day, but the seasons have been reduced in length from 30 days to 10, so you really need to organise your days well and use the extra time wisely.

> **"YOU HAVE TO LIVE THROUGH 30 YEARS OF GAME TIME, ALTHOUGH YOU DON'T PLAY EVERY SINGLE YEAR"**

The in-game years have been divided up into six chapters, which vary in length. The first chapter is only a year long. You begin by


Carter might give you this little horror.


Come on, Daisy. We're fed up of vegetables.


If you've got a pond and fewer than six chickens, you can start keeping ducks.



Hmm. Perhaps Muffy's too tarty to make a good wife. Who knows?


Bah – it's a lovely spring night, and we're young and alone.

acquiring your farm from a friend of your dad, and that's your career choice sorted for you. (Let's face it, if you don't want to be a farmer, you won't be buying this.) As well as getting your farm up and running, during the first year you have to meet your wife and marry her.

WIFE-SAVER

There there have been crucial updates in the lady department. Do you like Muffy, the foxy blonde barmaid in the red skirt? What about the nature-loving brown-haired Celia? Then there's Nancy, the feisty redhead who keeps talking about leaving Forget-Me-Not valley all together. Quite honestly, we'd steer clear of the redhead. She's not really affectionate enough for us.

You don't have any serious competition for the ladies' affections, but which female you date and marry affects lots of things, not least the appearance of your offspring, who you can watch grow up. There's a gap of several years between the first and second chapters, and your infant appears as a toddler in the second, thereby saving you the hassle of virtual nappy changes.

You'll also find that certain events, like festivals only happen on particular days. The New Year's Party is one you'll want to attend.

FOLK FESTIVAL

Besides the potential wives, more characters have been introduced to the game. Just as you age over the course of the 30 years, so do the people around you. Characters who are children when you first meet them, such as little piano-playing Lumina, grow up as the time passes. Eventually your son will fall in love with someone you knew as a child!

You can play through *A Wonderful Life* and how characters treat you depends a lot on your actions. If you're friendly enough with them and encounter them at particular times you'll get special items form them. Suary, for instance, will give you the shears you need to shear your sheep. Some characters are friendlier towards you if they get on well with your wife – Nancy may be a stroppy ginge, but marry her and Tim and Ruby will warm to you, whereas if you marry Muffy, Gafan will become your friend.

GROW AHEAD

A wider variety of crops has been introduced for you to grow, giving you more choice and adding a strategic element

GBA LINK



The GBA title *Harvest Moon: Friends of Mineral Town* will link up with *A Wonderful Life*. Eventually you'll build up profiles of the inhabitants of Forget-Me-Not Valley in the library in Mineral Town. Presumably so they can be blackmailed and the valley bulldozed to make way for a much-needed shopping mall.



TURN OVER
To see even more shots of Natsume's gorgeous grow-'em-up-and-chop-'em-down. This really is the good life...

SPECIAL INVESTIGATION

"With the help of a talking tree"



△ Despite all the pink, Kate's a tomboy.



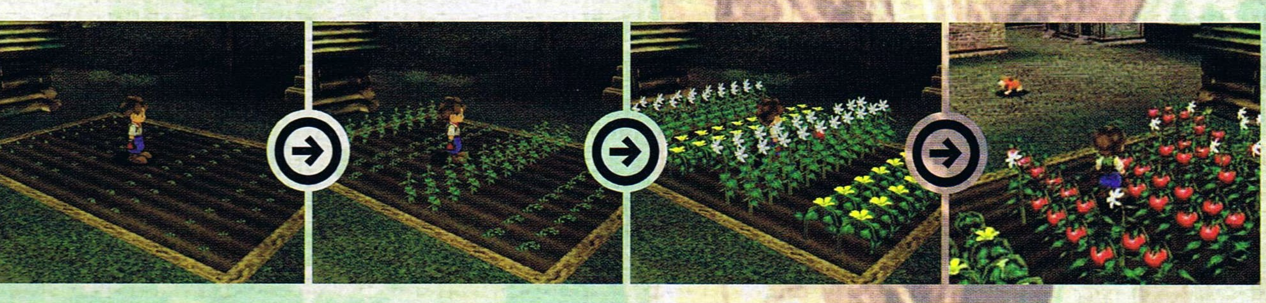
△ Sure beats our little farmhouse



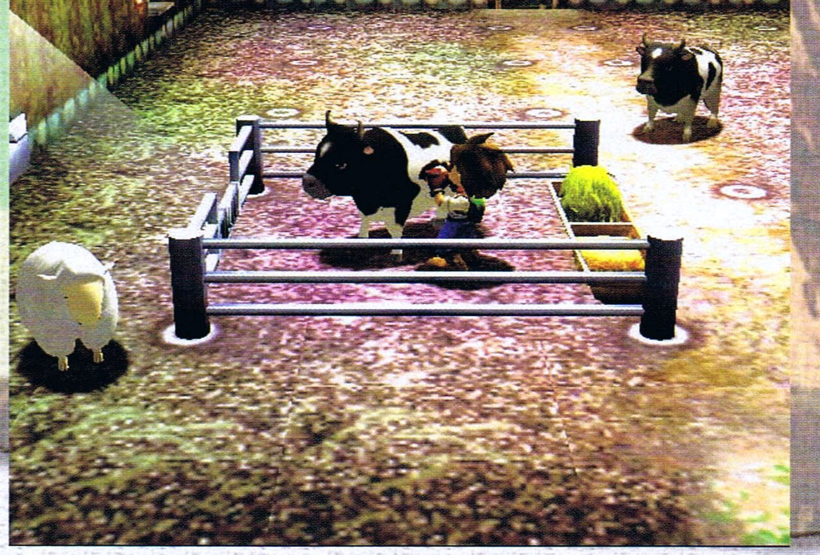
△ Aargh! We just married Celia, and now we've got a son to look after.

OOOH AAR!

Besides indulging in animal husbandry, you have to grow crops. The better you fertilise them, the better they grow and the more you can sell them for. Simple. Cross-seasonal crops mean you can have some ripe while others are flowering.







△ When your animals are in the barn, you have to feed them. Cows have to be put in the barn when it's raining or when they're about to produce a calf.









△ Alone at last with Nancy, the little minx.



Buy stuff? Can't we just swap it for a cow or something? Damn this capitalist economy!



of sorts to your planting. Some of them now grow across several seasons too, thereby doing away with the problems one-season crops caused in the earlier titles – if you plant turnips at the end of the 'Pepper' season, they'll carry on growing when the season changes to 'Indigo'. You still have to plant your crops (Vesta, Marlin and Celia all sell seeds) and water them, fertilising them if you can. You can eat some of your produce and sell the rest. Crop buyer Ban will buy B-ranked crops from you, but you won't get as much for them as you will for A-rank ones, so it's worth taking extra care with them.

Trees take longer to grow to maturity than ground crops, but ground crops only produce one harvest whereas trees produce repeat fruit harvests and so can be worth the investment.

Another new feature in *A Wonderful Life* is the ability to create hybrid crops. This is done not by cross-polination or any sinister genetic engineering, but with the help of a talking tree (yes…) called Tsurutan. So far all our attempts at crossing vegetables have failed, but we're determined to unleash tomato-melon hybrids on an unwitting world… Crossing a strawberry with a turnip, however, strikes us as Just Plain Wrong.

MOO



There are four breeds of cow. You start off with a basic black-and-white one but can buy others. In order of expense they are: normal, brown, marble and star. Each type gives a different sort of milk, but all of them must have a calf before they'll give milk, and then they'll only give milk for about a year. The calf lives in a special 'calf hatch' – or 'veal crate', as we prefer to call it.

NICE TO MEAT YOU

There are new animals, too, but you definitely can't cross-breed those. You can only get ducks if you've got a pond and not too many chickens. Chickens, dogs (you've a choice of two at the start of the game and, if

HARVEST MOON: AWL

You won't be down on the farm



SEASONING

Just as day turns to night, so the seasons pass beautifully. You'll love them all.



■ Ah, spring is in the air. Or, in Forget-Me-Not Valley, Parrot is in the air. That's what the season is called. Makes no sense to us, either.



■ Skipping over Pepper (summer), we've moved into Amber. This is the only time of year when your sweet potatoes will grow. Mmm!



■ What grows in Indigo? Carrots and turnips, that's what. Looks like you'd better start slaughtering the animals to eat…



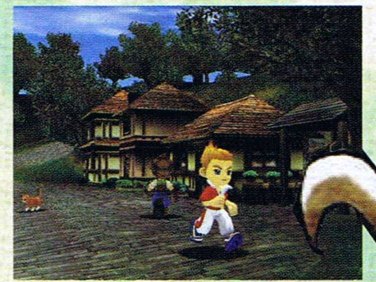
△ These glowing plants may look strange, but they're dead handy in the countryside where there aren't any streetlights.



△ Your horse is the fast way to get around Forget-Me-Not Valley. You can't sell it and, if you're feeling continental, you can't eat it.

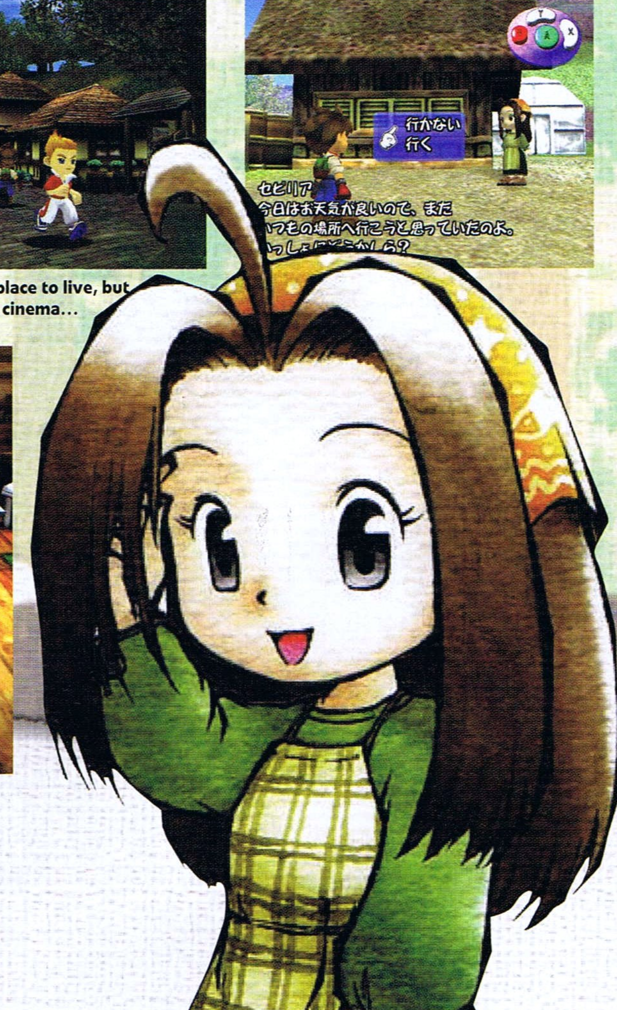


△ Mukumuku is some sort of guardian of nature. He's a benign creature.



△ It's not a bad place to live, but it could do with a cinema…

△ Celia's cooking here, but you can do it too various things you grow to make tasty dishes.



you play your cards right, have the potential to acquire a ratty little thing later on) and a horse can help round out your livestock roster. You get your horse for free.

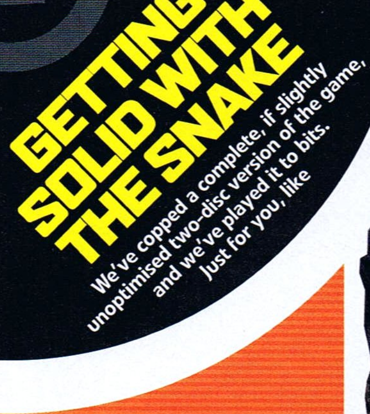
You start out with one cow and can buy others. Cows need to have calves if they're going to give milk, and that means you either need a bull of your own or you have to fork over several thousand coins to have a bull introduced to your cows. You can buy goats, which also give milk, from Chapter 2 onwards. Sheep need to be sheared once a season and can be temperamental – upset Flossie and the quality of her wool won't be as good. It's all too much…

> "HARVEST MOON TRADITION HAS BEEN REFINED AND EXPANDED RATHER THAN COMPLETELY OVERHAULED"

NO FARM DONE

All in all, *A Wonderful Life* is firmly entrenched in the *Harvest Moon* tradition, which has been refined and expanded, rather than completely overhauled. We're not entirely convinced by the ten-day seasons – call us old-fashioned, but ten days doesn't seem long enough for a season, no matter that the days have been made longer. On the other hand, the introduction of cross-seasonal crops is a huge improvement and more realistic – after all, you can plant things for early or late cropping in the real world, and your cabbages and sprouts don't suddenly fail when autumn slips into winter.

We reckon *Harvest Moon* fans will love this, and if you're also planning to get the GBA title *Friends of Mineral Town*, you'll have a great time exploiting the two games' connectivity. The American version of the game has a few translation problems at the moment – sometimes simple things like spelling and grammar, sometimes it's just plain iliterate – but hopefully the English language will be tweaked when all the other European languages are added. That aside, this is going to be a real winner.



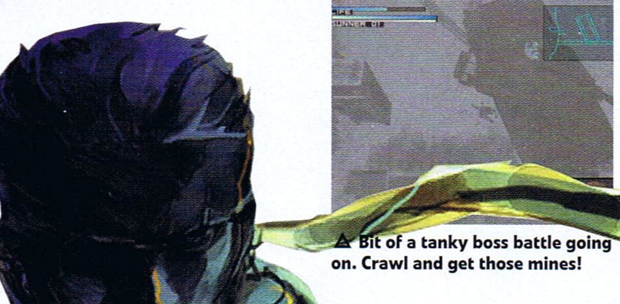
GETTING SOLID WITH THE SNAKE

We've copped a complete, if slightly unoptimised two-disc version of the game, and we've played it to bits. Just for you, like



THE KNOWLEDGE

- The original *Metal Gear Solid* from the PlayStation, now with better graphics and some new moves.
- Features enhanced cut-scenes and animations.
- Intelligent enemies who can track you down by following your footprints.
- Unlockable dogtags.
- Camera mode for saving snaps of your favourite scenes.
- Hide bodies in lockers.
- Meryl.



△ Bit of a tanky boss battle going on. Crawl and get those mines!



△ Snake searches for a way out. Hope he remembered his C4.

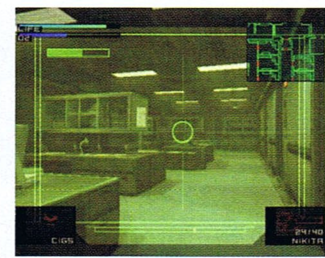


△ The cut-scenes are noticeably sharper than they were on PSone.



△ The mysterious Ninja character makes his first appearance here, and tears up a few soldiers for the camera. He does it very well, too.

△ Ever the optimist, Snake hopes the soldiers get bored and stop searching.



△ Flying the Nikita missile through a gas-filled laboratory. Happy days.



FACTFILE

- **Who's making it?**
  Silicon Knights
- **What have they done before?**
  Eternal Darkness (NGC/74, 89%)
  Top-of-the-range survival horror game, also converted from a previous console generation.

METAL GEAR SOLID THE TWIN SNAKES

How many Snakes does one game need? And are they both Solid? We demand answers.



If you're one of the few people who hasn't played at least part of this before, you'll certainly be aware of its reputation. *Metal Gear Solid* was one of the biggest games for the original PlayStation, an adventure with mass-market appeal that shifted consoles for Sony in the same way *Grand Theft Auto* has in recent years.

At the time, Nintendo gamers had a superior stealth game in the peerless *GoldenEye*, which was a lot more fun to play, but everyone here at **NGC** will freely admit to casting envious glances at the super-cool cinematic style of Konami's title.

But there was no squeezing this monster of a game, hours of cut-scenes and all, onto a cartridge. If you didn't buy a PlayStation, you couldn't have it.

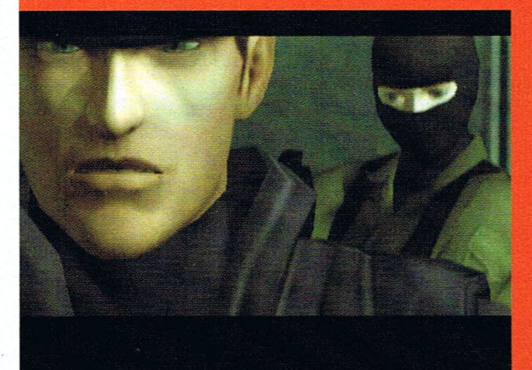
It tested our resolve, and more than one of us cracked and went over temporarily to the dark side, returning with tales of outlandish bosses, unforgettable scenes and some supremely inventive moments from director Hideo Kojima. And now *MGS* is finally available for a Nintendo console.

> "SOME OUTLANDISH BOSSES, UNFORGETTABLE SCENES AND TRULY INVENTIVE MOMENTS"

Although almost every stealth game since has ripped off *Metal Gear Solid* to such an extent that you're unlikely to find many surprises in this Gamecube remake, we still practically tore the delivery man's hands off when he showed up in the office with this eagerly anticipated two-disc set. It was the first time we've ever got to play the entire thing, as only brief demos have been available since *MGS: The Twin Snakes* was first announced and, having been somewhat disappointed by our previous plays through the opening areas of this

POLY FILLER!

Polygon demo – that's *MGS*-speak for cut-scene or in-game cinema or whatever you want to call them. There are loads, and they're very nice.



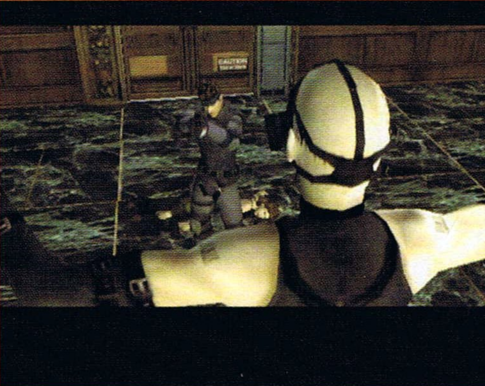
■ Who could that be? This is where Snake scopes out the guards' bottoms, to see which one is the woman.



■ Snake clearly isn't feeling all that solid at the moment. You're wasting your time, love.



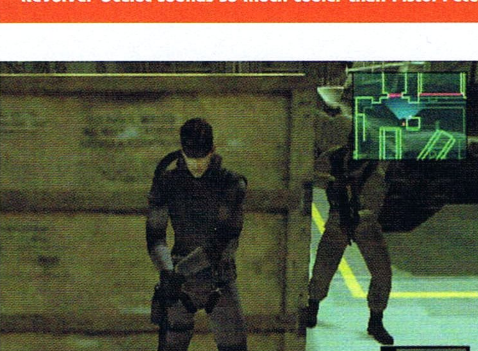
■ What an excellent character, and a great name too. Revolver Ocelot sounds so much cooler than Pistol Pete.



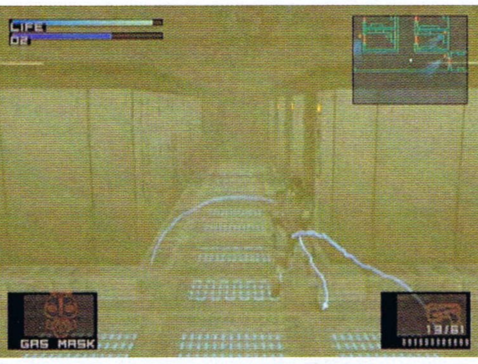


■ Bring out the gimp! This particular freak is a psychic nutcase who can read your mind and rumble your pad.

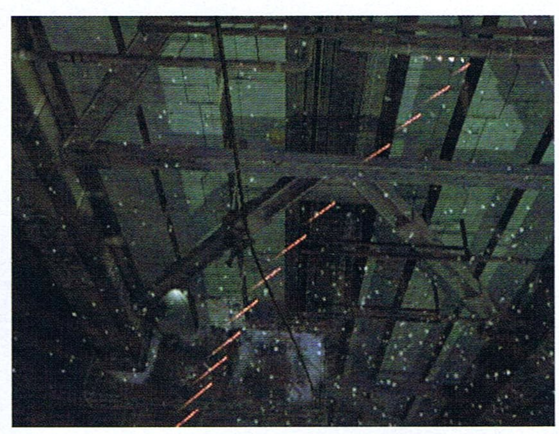
△ The greeny-blue colour is a recurring *Metal Gear Solid* theme. That, and the crimson stains from a nice bit of arterial spray.



△ All you need to do is stay nice and quiet. The camera angle changes while hiding, to show the enemy's position.



△ This area has been previously cleared but there's still just a teensy bit of static electricity in the air.



△ Abseiling down the side of a massive tower, in the middle of a blizzard, while a helicopter sprays bullets at you. Easy, right?

Gamecube version, we wanted to know if the game still has what it takes. Is it a long since superceded throwback, or genuinely a better game than its PS2 sequel?

GEARACHE

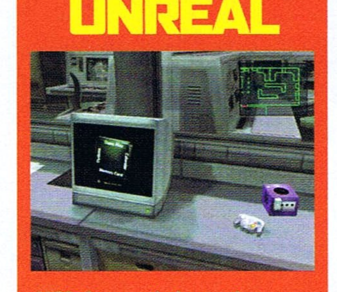
First of all, we're happy to report that the frame rate problems we noticed in the past are almost exclusively limited to the first two locations, which (bizarrely) were the ones shown in the demo.

Developers Silicon Knights have been optimising the code bit by bit, and it now runs at a steady 60fps in most places. Special effects can sometimes slow things down on screen, but you can expect the entire game to be nice and smooth everywhere by the time it's released in March 2004.

The controls take a bit of getting used to if you're familiar with the other two *MGS* titles. They were designed to use every feature on the PlayStation controller, which has two more buttons than the Gamecube pad, so button combinations are needed to bring up the codec communication screen and the map.

And although it's a remake of the first game, many features have been taken from the sequel, which is the only game to make really good use of the analogue pressure buttons on the PS2 controller. For example, to draw your gun you have to hold down the button. It fires as soon as you release it, but on PS2 you could ease off the pressure carefully to lower the gun without shooting. On Gamecube you roll your thumb up onto the Y-button to avoid shooting.

UNREAL



***MGS* often reminds you that you're playing a game. Sometimes amusingly, such as Snake's occasional glances into the camera and the bit when one enemy warns you not to use autofire, before plugging Snake into the mains. Or this, a little Gamecube on somebody's desk.**

STEALTH VISITOR

Another good thing taken from the sequel is the ability to drag bodies away from patrol routes to avoid detection, but most of the time you'll want to do as little killing as possible.

The slightest noise is enough to alert every guard in the area, and once they've called for backup reinforcements arrive continuously until you either manage to find yourself a safe hiding place or simply get overwhelmed.

Metal Gear Solid takes its stealth extremely seriously.

TURN OVER
For more details on how this Gamecube remake matches up to both the original version and the PS2 sequel.



DID YOU KNOW? Actor David Hayter, who plays Solid Snake, is also the man who says: "EA Sports – it's in the game." And he wrote the screenplays for X-Men, X-Men 2 and The Scorpion King.



△ If Snake could only climb into that tank and start laying the place to waste. They wouldn't laugh at his bandana after that.



△ Meryl is Snake's companion for much of the adventure. Even when they're separated they can keep in touch via the codec.

SNAKE STYLE

So you want cool new stuff, do you? Here's a few bits and pieces we've spotted that improve upon the original game...



■ First-person mode. You still can't walk around like this, it's just for aiming your weapon.



■ Evasion camera. When you're hiding you'll see a cutaway view of the soliders looking for you.



■ Sleeping dogs. Unconscious guards need to be dragged elsewhere before they get spotted.



△ Another typical day at an American high school. Or maybe it's just the aftermath of some Ninja-related tomfoolery. Yes, that'll be it.

There's no halfway house option to break out the guns when things get tough, then maybe return to the level later on to try for a better rating. You either play it Hideo Kojima's way or suffer a gaming experience diluted by constant interruptions from the famous 'Snake? Snaaake!' continue screen.

CHATS OFF

This being *Metal Gear Solid*, you'll also spend a lot of time listening to conversations on Snake's codec radio system. Disappointingly, the 3D animations that accompanied these chit-chats in the PS2 sequel *Sons of Liberty* haven't been included here, so you'll have to put up with the same low-res 2D pictures as the original game.

Many of these conversations last several minutes and are not amazingly entertaining, but the quality of the cut-scenes more than makes up for the somewhat muddled codec plot-weaving.

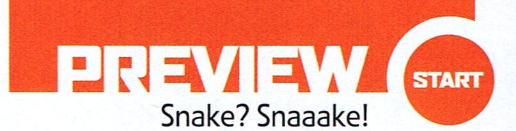
It's incredibly cinematic at times, directed with an artistic flair that few titles have ever matched. Everything is done using the in-game engine rather than pre-rendered FMV, so the graphical enhancements made possible by the Gamecube really do make a huge difference. Now you can see the characters lip-synching along with the dialogue, and the expressiveness of the facial models adds a new emotional impact. You'll certainly empathise with the characters' pain in some scenes.

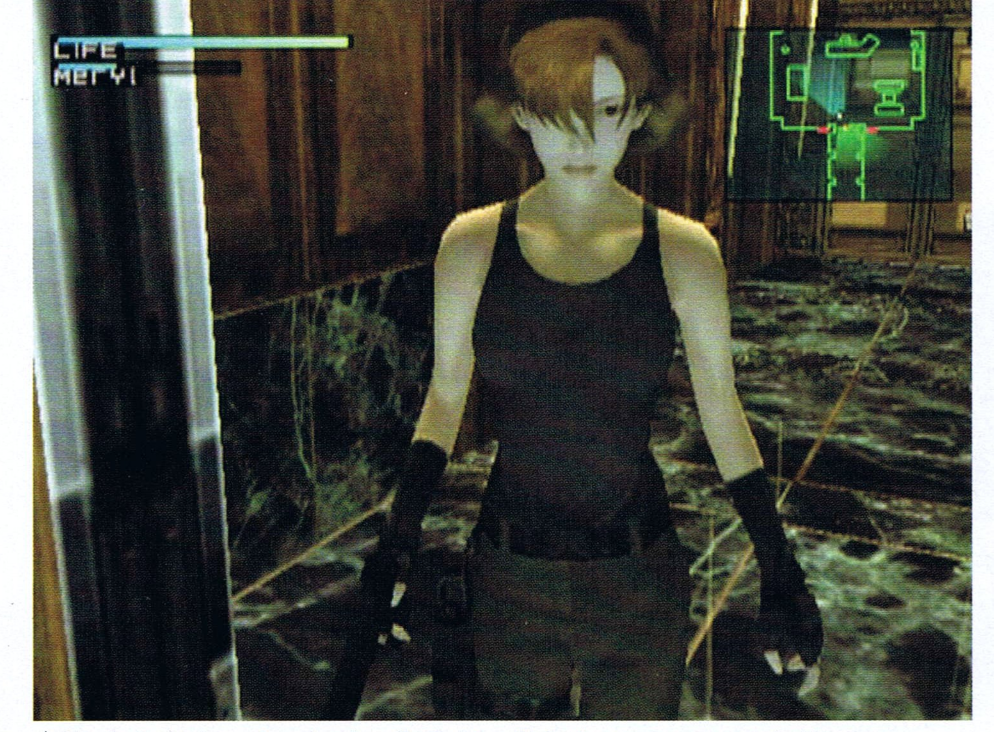
There's no doubt that the storyline here is far more coherent than *MGS2*, the sequel, which indulged in mind-numbing half-hour

UNCUT

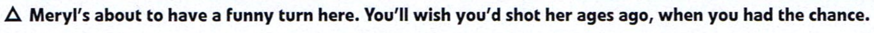
The days when Nintendo would have censored this game are long gone. This naked man's backside was pixellated out in the original too, thank goodness. Elsewhere Snake's cancer sticks, which he uses to detect infrared beams, are present and correct, having been replaced with a 'fogger' in the old Game Boy *MGS* title.

> **"EVERYTHING IS DONE USING THE IN-GAME ENGINE RATHER THAN PRE-RENDERED FMV"**





Δ Meryl's about to have a funny turn here. You'll wish you'd shot her ages ago, when you had the chance.





Δ If this boss doesn't scare the pants off you, you're barely breathing.



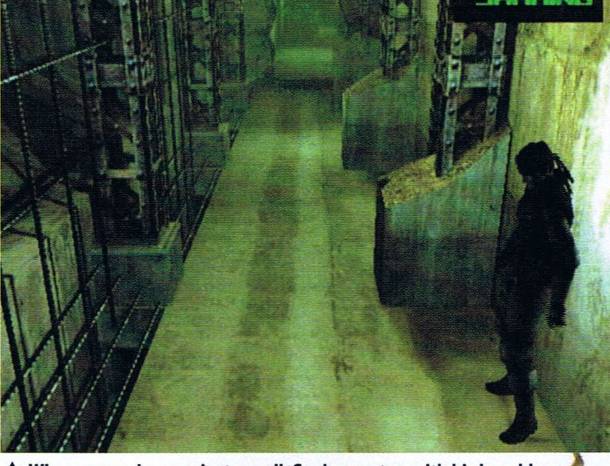
Δ Eat missile, scumdogs. These guys can withstand a couple of direct hits. Must be something to do with their blue boiler suits.



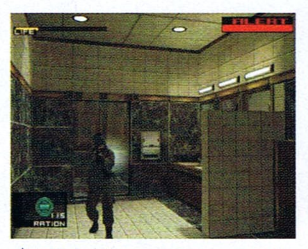
Δ The game pauses and displays instructions when changing items.



Δ This is a heat-seeking missile. Ideal for shooting at aircraft.



Δ When pressed up against a wall, Snake can tap with his knuckles or pistol butt. It's for distracting enemies and testing for hollow walls.


Δ This is where you're supposed to drop your gun and surrender.



Δ Don't start getting all shy on me, Meryl, you little tease.

conversations about pointless nonsense such as what a character's ex-girlfriend might be having for dinner that evening.

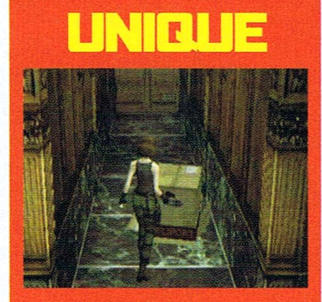
Even so, if you've never seen one of these games in the past you're likely to be overwhelmed by the amount of plot compared to the amount of playing time involved.

YOU TWIN AGAIN

We've battled our way through almost the entire thing now, searching our recollection of the original to spot any major things which have been changed in the conversion, but apart from the odd remastered cut-scene, the flashy graphics and the aforementioned gameplay tweaks from *MGS2, The Twin Snakes* is the same as it was on the PlayStation. We haven't spotted any new areas or found any new unlockable extras, although we expect there's some stuff tucked away as rewards for persistent players. The *Metal Gear* titles are well known for their wealth of secret bonuses and amusing little touches.

New bits or not, there's definitely something special about *MGS*. The chance to get reacquainted with the likes of Revolver Ocelot, Psycho Mantis, Sniper Wolf and the lovely Meryl, all in super hi-res-o-vision, is too good to pass up. And if those names mean nothing to you right now, rest assured that by the end of March they'll be imprinted on your brain forever.

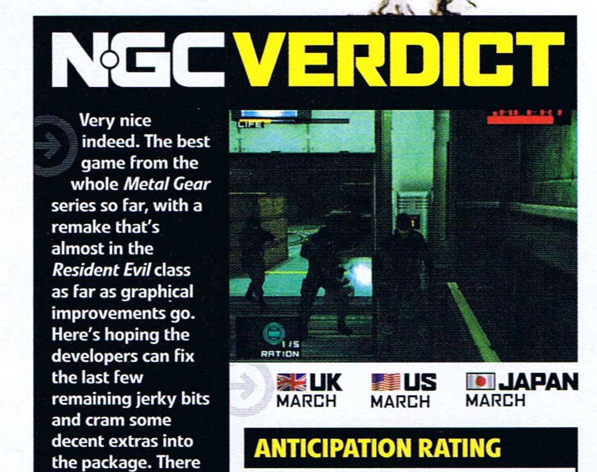
UNIQUE



Shooting and hiding are plenty of fun in all sorts of games but there are some things that you can only do in *Metal Gear Solid*. Snake's signature move is his uncanny ability to hide himself under a large cardboard box. Wearing this cunning disguise he can waddle around until the cardboard goes soggy in the rain.

NGC VERDICT

Very nice indeed. The best game from the whole *Metal Gear* series so far, with a remake that's almost in the *Resident Evil* class as far as graphical improvements go. Here's hoping the developers can fix the last few remaining jerky bits and cram some decent extras into the package. There must be a good reason for it coming on two discs.



UK MARCH | US MARCH | JAPAN MARCH

ANTICIPATION RATING: 1 2 3 4 **5**

"IT'S GOOD TO ORC..."

We take Jaleco's *Goblin Commander* for a spin this month, pepped up on *Lord of the Rings* fever and ready for some hardcore troll-tickling. Except for Kittsy, who reserves his dwarf-tossing for Saturday nights. He's a curious bloke...



△ Look! Goblins. As you'd expect in a game called *Goblin Commander*. Nasty little buggers.



△ Larger units, such as this Titan, can be used to wreak extra-crumpy damage. Big – but slow.



△ The first few levels serve as a tutorial and introduce the story of the game. Nicely done.

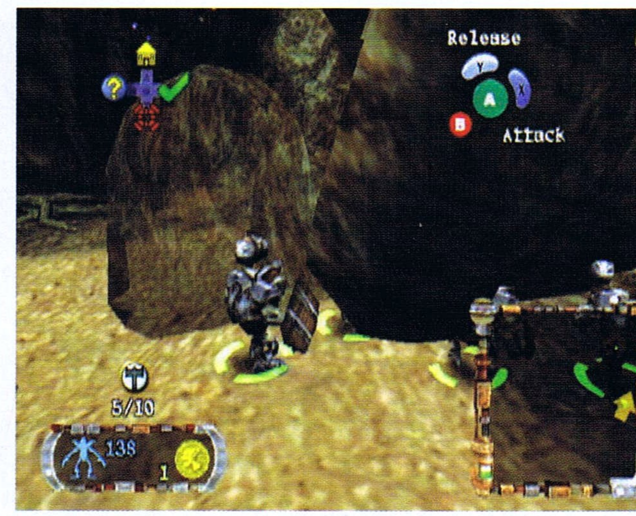


THE KNOWLEDGE

- Control hordes of goblins in your quest from world domination!
- Five different goblin clans to play as, each of which has its own special abilities and scissors/paper/stone relationship.
- Single-player Campaign mode offers 12 different environments to fight over.
- Two-player multiplayer support for split-screen goblin action, although unfortunately there's no LAN play.



△ Get a resource-creating building and you can zoom inside to see what you can build with it. It's best to go with a few basic troops to begin with.



△ The StoneKrusher clan, as their name suggests, are great at demolishing enormous boulders and rocks.

FACTFILE

Who's making it?
Jaleco

What have they done before?
Jazz Jackrabbit (GBA, not reviewed)
Second-rate platforming rabbit who seems to crop up every year. An odious creation.



GOBLIN COMMANDER
UNLEASH THE HORDE

Let's face it, who *hasn't* wanted to command goblins? Anyone?

What a name. It's either the product of demented genius or simply awful. We're not quite sure. However, despite its hideous title, *Goblin Commander* is most definitely not as rubbish as you probably think it is.

It is, in fact, tremendous fun. Sure, it looks a little ropy – stick it next to *Pikmin* and the difference is staggering – but this is a strategy game designed to appeal to people who normally hate strategy games. *Goblin Commander's* strength lies in its simplicity. While dedicated play reveals subtlety and depth, this is initially a piece of cake. There are five different goblin clans, all of whom have a speciality. The StoneKrushers, for example, excel at head-battering and rock-disposal. Different units can be 'bound' to various buttons to allow you to control them swiftly, and otherwise the game revolves around setting waypoints for your units to follow – they'll automatically attack anything in their way – or taking control of the unit and moving them yourself. Easy. Resource management is similarly basic; it's simply about owning buildings and then trying to win with what you've got available. *Goblin Commander*, for all its creaky visuals and unsexy subject matter, is shaping up to be both hugely playable and oddly charming. We'll know more when we review the game next month…

> **"A STRATEGY GAME DESIGNED TO APPEAL TO PEOPLE WHO HATE STRATEGY GAMES"**

NGC VERDICT

Goblin Commander looks dreadful in places – though the goblins hold a certain charm – and is yet another strategy game involving fantasy armies. But it's delivered in such an assured way that you can't help but enjoy it. Crucially, from what we've seen, it's brilliant fun to play too. The first big surprise of 2004? Could be.



UK FEB/MAR | US NOW | JAPAN NOW

ANTICIPATION RATING

1 2 3 **4** 5



DID YOU KNOW? Marcus is **NGC**'s very own goblin commander, marshalling the grubby little guttersnipes that produce this mag every month. It helps that Geraint looks like a little troll, too.

SEGA



















A TOUGH TEAM SONIC HEROES FOR A TOUGH JOB

In 1991 a supersonic hero was born. Today, still wanted the world over, he works as part of a crack team. United in the fight against evil, Sonic, Knuckles and Tails use their combined skills of speed, power and flight to destroy the wicked Dr.Eggman. To join them, just choose from one of four teams and 12 specially skilled characters for the supersonic adventure of a lifetime.





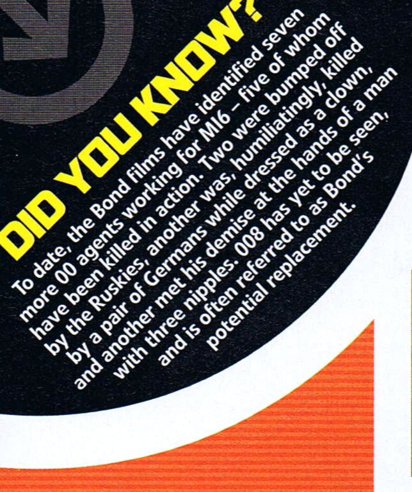




"SOLE-SMOULDERING SLIPSTREAM FUN"
OPS2M

"LOOKING LIKE THE BEST 3D SONIC GAME YET"
GAMESMASTER

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THE KNOWLEDGE

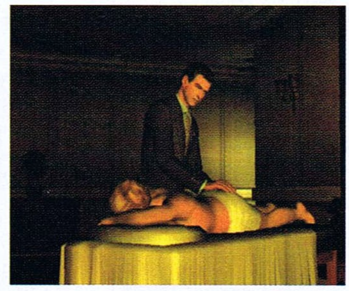
- All-new Bond game that's not based on any film.
- Uses all the usual Bond film cast, complete with the real actors' likenesses *and* voices.
- Massive single-player game played in the third person, with the chance to take control of assorted vehicles.
- Co-op mode that works as a game in its own right.

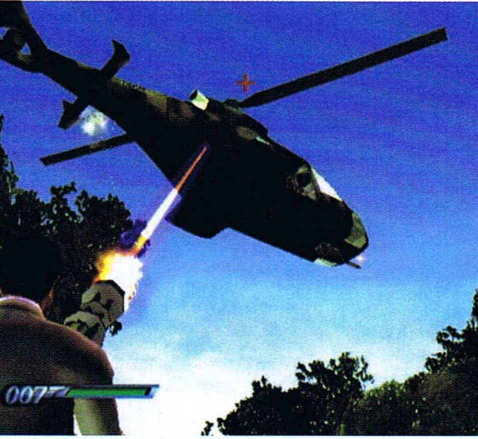
FACTFILE

Who's making it?
EA

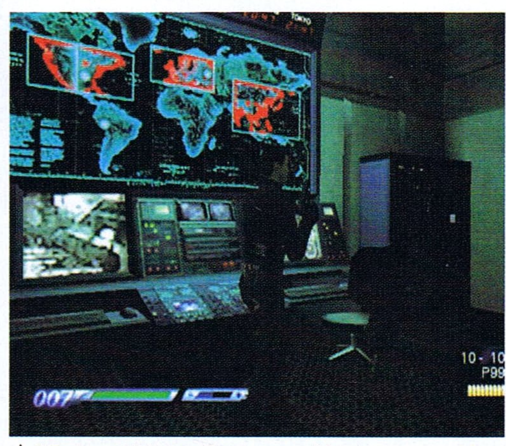
What have they done before?
Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone (NGC/89, 70%)
Based on some book. Apparently it's really famous.


Δ This helicopter section had a shocking frame rate. This should be sorted out.


Δ Various 'Bond moments' are dotted about in each level. Here's one of them.


Δ One of the many tank driving sections. Here the action is on rails, allowing you to focus on manning the gun turret...


Δ Press up against any wall and Bond will side up to it, allowing you to peek around corners for extra cover while trading gunfire against enemies hiding in the scenery.


Δ It just wouldn't be a Bond game without a neon world map denoting some kind of intended global dominance.

JAMES BOND 007 EVERYTHING OR NOTHING

Don't just be Bond – *see* Bond. **NGC** takes Brosnan out for a run. Watch his little legs churn…




With the lack of a Bond film for the year ahead, it's going to fall to *Everything or Nothing* to deliver cheesy action thrills to those who crave it. EA have certainly been beavering away to deliver something a little more special than the rather humdrum *Agent Under Fire* and *Nightfire*. First off, they've actually managed to get Pierce Brosnan's genuine voice (as well as his mug) into the game, which is a good start, and on top of this you've got all the supporting cast. Dench, Cleese and… er… Klum, all help to give the game that inimitable Bond movie feel. In this respect then, Bond fans have nothing to worry about.

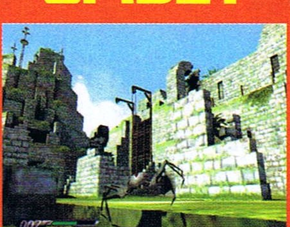
PUNY-BOND?

Of course, all that doesn't mean anything if it plays like an old chuffer and, fortunately, it doesn't. We've managed to get stuck into nearly all of the game's levels as well as spending a few sessions with the co-op mode, and it's safe to say that it's not going to be a disappointment.

Starting with the single-player game, then – you'll find this is an extremely sizeable and, even more pleasingly, a *wildly varied* experience. The third-person on foot sections work far better than we imagined they would. Controlling Bond himself is reasonably intuitive.


Δ Your thermal imaging goggles let you pick out enemies in the dark.

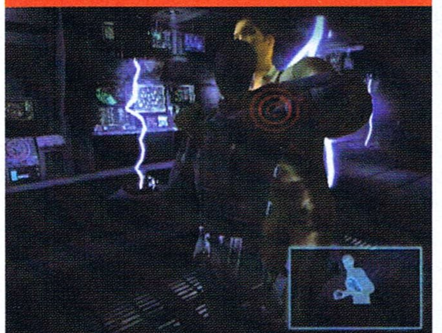
SPIDEY



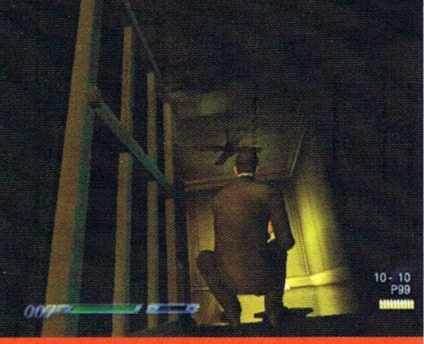
More than a whiff of *Turok Evolution* here – but don't run for the hills just yet. One of Bond's gadgets is a little techno-spider. Initially, it can only be used for reconnaissance, allowing you to check out the level ahead without putting yourself in too much danger. Later on you can upgrade the spider. In one instance when we were in a vacated mansion house, with a sniper taking pot shots at us in the rafters, we sent old Spidey up there armed with explosives and took the shooter out the cowardly way. Cheeky.

SWEET AS...

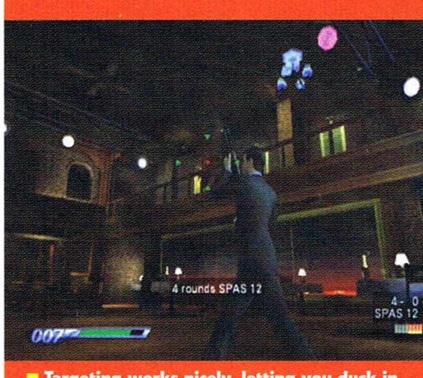
There are loads of cracking little touches in *EoN*. Here are a few of our faves...



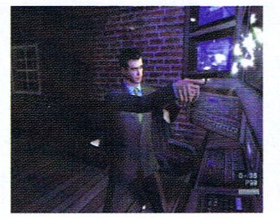
■ Hit the D-pad to select a weapon and time slows down and focuses on points of interest.



■ Using your rappel, you can climb up many vertical surfaces in the game. It's all very slick.



■ Targeting works nicely, letting you duck in and out of cover and kill with deadly accuracy.



Δ Bond's likeness is very well done. In fact, presentation...



Δ ...throughout the game is superb, with some nicely...



Δ ...varied locations for the action to unfold in.



Δ Tapping the Z button puts Bond into a more cautious and stealthy stance, allowing you to creep up on people and use cover effectively.



Δ Both the interior and exterior locations are all nicely detailed...



Δ ...In this case you take part in a tank battle across Red Square.

You can run around or, by tapping the Z button, you can slow your movements down to a more stealthy crouched walk.

Targetting is pretty much taken care of for you. Hitting the L trigger highlights a nearby enemy in a way not massively dissimilar to *Metroid Prime*. We initially felt that this dumbed down the process of dispatching the game's enemies, but that was before we discovered a rather subtle aiming feature. You can use the C stick to make more precise adjustments to your aiming by moving a secondary targetting reticule within the primary one, allowing you to score those all-important headshots.

Bond's actions are also pretty simple. When you've manoeuvred him to various hot spots (such as switches, important items and the like), tapping A in these context-sensitive areas will execute an action – so no more needless fiddling about with item inventories. Pretty slick stuff, by all accounts.

PIERCE OF THE ACTION

For every couple of walky-shooty sections (apologies for the technical language) there's a selection of driving bits to complement them. So far we've had a crack at an on-rails tank level, a free-roaming driving section a la *Agent Under Fire*, the chance to pilot a helicopter, indulge in a couple of motorbike chases and a more conventional point-A-to-point-B driving section in pursuit of a train.

The driving segments are all action-packed but, despite being the handiwork of EA's *Need for Speed Underground* coders, these are the areas that need the most attention before the game's released in March. The frame rate is appaling in places, while the handling leaves a lot to be desired. Despite these issues, though, they're still good fun.

The last thing we tested out was the multiplayer. While there were a number of competitive modes on offer, we had the most fun with the co-operative mode . The levels in co-op are entirely different from the main game and are designed around the need for players to interact. This makes the mode a substantial experience in its own right.

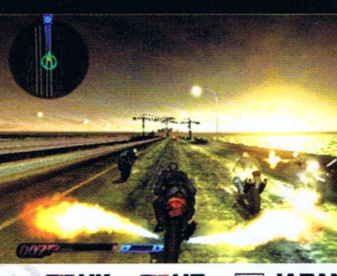
We'll have a review next month.

> **"YOU'LL FIND AN EXTREMELY SIZEABLE AND, EVEN MORE PLEASINGLY, A WILDLY VARIED EXPERIENCE THROUGHOUT"**

NGC VERDICT

So far so good. There are a number of technical issues (our version of the game kept crashing, for example) but there's no way that EA will release the game without these problems being resolved.

On the whole, *EoN* is shaping up to be a belter of a James Bond title, offering a pleasingly different experience to the usual 007 fare...





UK FEB | US FEB | JAPAN TBA

ANTICIPATION RATING









1 2 3 4 5



EVERY OTHER NEW GAME THAT MATTERS – EVERY SINGLE MONTH!

ROUNDUP



PUYO POP FEVER

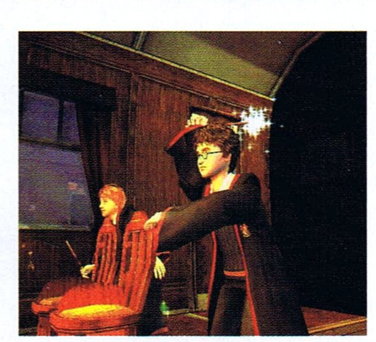
Dropping bean/block/bubble madness from Sega's Sonic Team. The *Puyo Puyo* series (aka *Kirby's Avalanche/ Dr Robotnik's Mean Bean Machine*) hits Cube with anime-styled visuals, a blend of 2D and 3D effects and the new Fever mode, which accelerates the action once you fill up your fever gauge. Could emerge as the most frantic two-player game on GC...



Get popping in February



Δ Our three heroes seem to be getting younger in the games. Look, they're tiny.



Δ Ron finds safety behind a chair, leaving Harry to sort things out. Typical.

HARRY POTTER AND THE PRISONER OF AZKABAN

The third instalment in JK Rowling's wizard thing traces the events of Harry's third year at Hogwarts. Wizard and convicted murderer (and now escaped prisoner) Sirius Black – played by Gary Oldman in the film – pays a visit to the School of Witchcraft and Wizardry, with Azkaban's guards, the grim reaper-like Dementors, in hot pursuit.

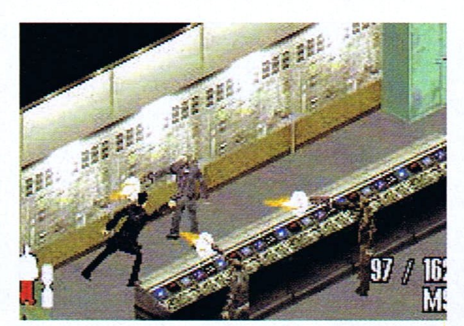
The game of the film of the book should be out in the spring (just ahead of the 4th June release of the movie). Developed once again by EA UK, it pretty much stacks up like the previous two games, only with a number of subtle additions. In addition to Harry, you'll now be able to control Ron and Hermione when each one's unique powers are required. You'll get to ride on the back of Hippogriff, take part in a number of two-player games and, thankfully, not have to put the kettle on while the game loads (*Azkaban* uses a new 3D engine that reduces loading times, as well as, we're told, allows for more enhanced effects).

Whether this'll all be enough to please videogame fans rather than Potter purists remains to be seen.

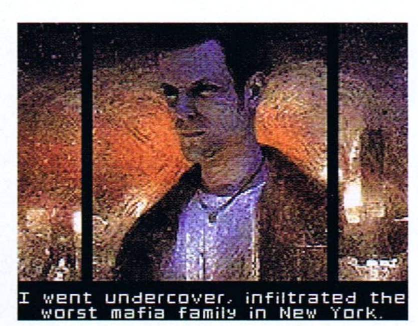
The new term starts in the spring

HOT NEW MOBILE ENTERTAINMENT

GBA ROUNDUP



Δ Outgunned 3-1, this is the kind of place to trigger Bullet Time (watch the timer, bottom-left).



Δ The graphic novel cut-scenes have made the transition from home console to GBA well.

MAX PAYNE



Everyone loves a bit of Bullet Time – the Matrix-style effect that lets you dive across the room in slow-mo while pumping enemies full of warm lead death. *Max Payne* received lots of attention on the back of its use of this feature on its release on PC and consoles, and now we're getting to try it out all over again on GBA. The stark tale of a fugitive cop cutting his way through ten levels packed with New York's most sinister inhabitants, the whole thing's tied together with brilliant between-level storytelling. It's received positive feedback in the US – we'll take a look next issue.

Available in the US right now





Δ Use Nova's Cloaking Psi ability to sneak up on an enemy – or simply go in feet blazing…

STARCRAFT GHOST

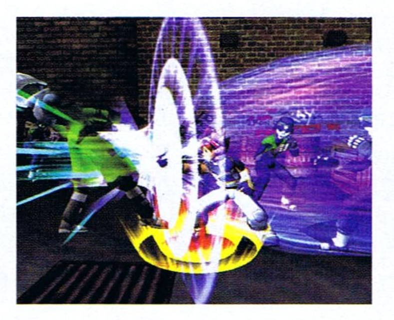
It seems like Blizzard's stealth-action-adventure game's been in the works for years – and there's still no chance of playing the finished version for the next six months.

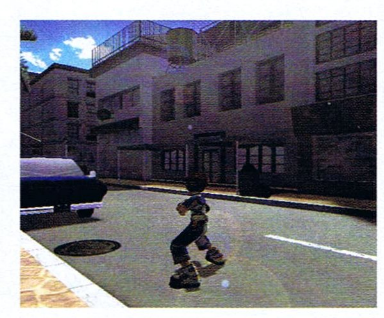
Mixing elements of *Splinter Cell* with uniquely *StarCraft* ingredients (heroine Nova takes on the Zerg, Terrans and Protoss), and finishing the whole thing off with Psi abilities and the chance to call in a tactical nuclear strike when things start getting really sticky, it's no wonder we're a little disappointed at the news of a delay. Still, we'd rather play a game that the development squad were happy with than something where corners had been cut to ship it on time.

Incidentally, if you're a fan of the *StarCraft* RTS titles, you might be interested to hear that both the Terrans and the Protoss are getting new unit types in *Ghost*. The Protoss will now pack a ranged infantry unit – watch out for them in the Protoss base infiltration missions. The Terrans just have to make do with a light infantry unit, which you'll see in various Terran installations. Neat.

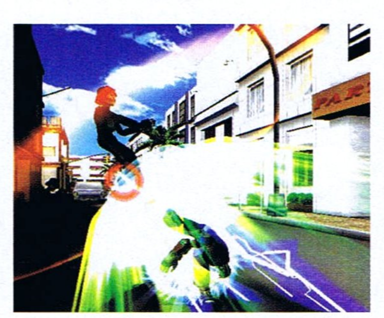
Not until the second half of 2004

VIRTUA FIGHTER CYBER GENERATION









Δ See that pink plasma whip, bottom left? As well as using it to swing around the game world, you can latch it onto enemies, enabling you to chain attacks together.

Brilliant, *brilliant* name. *Virtua Fighter Cyber Generation: Ambition of the Judgement Six*? Don't mind if we do. Looking at the screenshots, it's hard to believe this is the new entry in Sega's long-running one-on-one beat-'em-up series, but bear with us…

Cyber Generation is an action RPG where you take control of Sei, a 14-year-old Treasure Hunter, whose role is to patrol a virtual reality zone known as Nexus, looking for lost pieces of data. One day he sees something he shouldn't have and ends up getting involved with the Judgement Six (J6) – a mysterious group formed by six of the world's biggest industries. And here's the *Virtua Fighter* connection… Both Sei and J6 are trying to track down Virtua Souls – missing pieces of data that hold the combat information of those that took part in a tournament to name the world's best fighter. It's believed that this information can be used to help break through Nexus' incredibly strict security systems.

Essentially you make your way around the game world tracking down the 50+ *Virtua Fighter* moves, which you can then use in battle. These are triggered using the X, Y and Z buttons alone (no need to input them in true *VF* tradition). Doesn't sound too complex, and indeed, Sega are aiming this at younger gamers. More soon…

Out in Japan this summer

F-ZERO LEGEND OF FALCON

Currently on NoE's release list as '*F-Zero 2*', this sees Captain Falcon and co join the cast of the Japan-only F-Zero cartoon. With over 30 characters, each with a story told through cut-scenes, this is more of a story-driven game, but with mist, snow and mines the racing will still be demanding…

Out 'Q2 2004'. That's Easter, then



Δ As well as the regular Story mode, you'll be able to take part in tests to help enhance your skills.

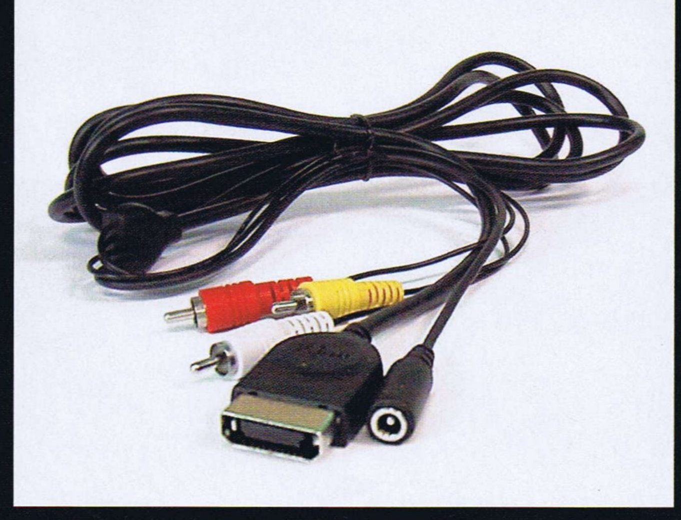


Δ You get the cut-scenes before and after each mission. All the stories interweave too.

Retro a-go-go…

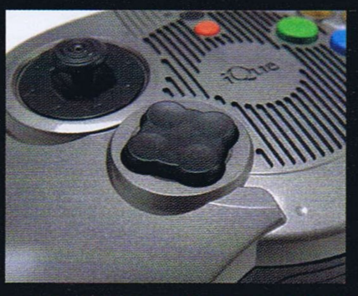
iQUE

The N64 in a controller – Nintendo's attempt to sieze the massive Chinese market from the pirates…



LEADS AND STUFF

Composite video for the PAL TV signal and a 240V two-prong adaptor that also plugs into the video lead. The iQue has a USB port, presumably so you can store games on a PC instead of having to buy more memory cards. For multiplayer titles you'll need to buy link-up leads and a four-way hub.





D-PAD AND JOYSTICK

The joystick is exactly the same design as the N64 analogue stick, which is stiffer and offers more resistance than the Gamecube version. It doesn't have the rubberised top either, so it's a bit of a culture shock after being spoiled with the Gamecube pad for the last couple of years. For some reason the iQue doesn't use the traditional Nintendo cross-pad design and opts for a D-pad that's very difficult to use accurately. Fortunately few N64 titles rely on the D-pad.



MEMORY CARD

64MB of memory is enough to store even the largest N64 games. You take the card to an iQue kiosk and use the security number printed on special game cards to download a title of your choice. Each game card costs the equivalent of just over £3.



BUTTONS (NINE OF 'EM)

They're not made of the usual Nintendo shiny plastic. These buttons are textured and a little bit clickier than the originals. The absence of the central prong from the N64 pad means the Z-button has been tucked away underneath the left shoulder button. Takes some getting used to, but it works.

HOW TO BUY ONE

We've no idea if there's a chance Nintendo'll release this outside of China. It's old technology, but we reckon if it went for £25 with games at a fiver each, it 'd do pretty well over here. If you do want to import a Chinese model you can buy 'em for around £80 on the internet.

HOW TO WIN ONE

Tell us in no more than 25 words why you deserve an iQue. Send your entry to: iQue For One, **NGC**, 30 Monmouth St, Bath BA1 2BW. The reader who sends the best answer by February 30th wins one. Editors decision is final. Very final.

THE GAMES

240 blocks on your memory card – spend them wisely…



DR MARIO

YEAR OF RELEASE: 2001
MEMORY CARD BLOCKS: 13

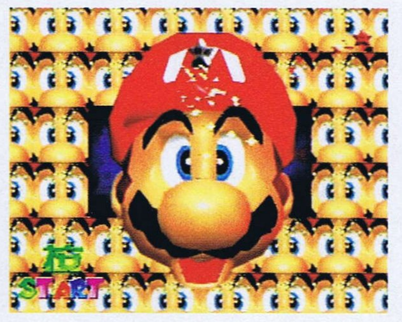
The newest game available for the iQue is also the least interesting. It's a straight conversion of the N64 remake of an NES puzzler, in which Mario matches coloured pills to eliminate viruses, just like a real doctor. Well, sort of. This one comes pre-loaded on the iQue memory card to start off your Nintendo collection. It's free, so you can't complain.



ZELDA: OCARINA OF TIME

YEAR OF RELEASE: 1998
MEMORY CARD BLOCKS: 114

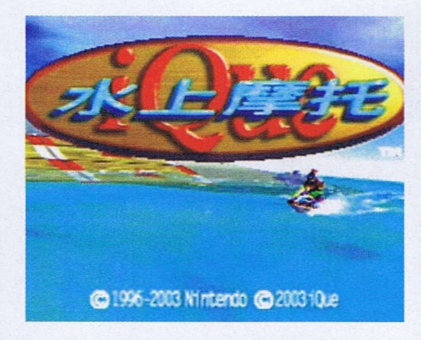
This is much more like it – one of the best games ever, squeezed onto a tiny memory card that slots into a controller that fits in a coat pocket. When we reviewed this it came on a cart 12 inches tall and we had to fly out to Germany to play it.



SUPER MARIO 64

YEAR OF RELEASE: 1996
MEMORY CARD BLOCKS: 31

The original and best 3D platform game. Now it's all in Chinese (like every iQue game actually) and there's a slightly tweaked title screen. It now has iQue logos in the background and there's a smart tiling effect that puts Mario's face all over the screen when you press the Z-button. Very nice.



WAVE RACE

YEAR OF RELEASE: 1997
MEMORY CARD BLOCKS: 32

If, like us, you have fond memories of *Wave Race* being one of the best-looking games of its time, you'd probably better not play this one. It looks incredibly dodgy now. The once-stunning wave effects look clumsy, and the fact that it's the slower PAL conversion makes it even less attractive. Time has not been kind to this aquatic racing superstar.

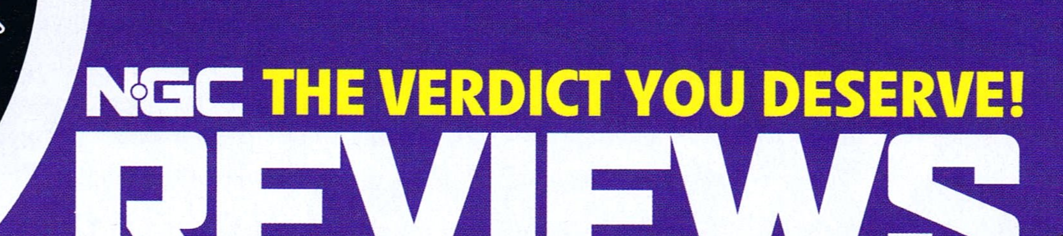


STARFOX 64

YEAR OF RELEASE: 1997
MEMORY CARD BLOCKS: 46

This was the first game to use the legendary Rumble Pak. The iQue doesn't have any rumble though, so you don't get the pleasure of having your hands vibrated until all the feeling vanishes from your fingertips. Everything else is the same, apart from a new Chinese dub. All the unskippable cut-scenes are present and correct, and there's still no level select.

OUR PROMISE
Our reviewers are the most talented and knowledgeable Nintendo fans in the business. We don't only play games at work – we play them at home too, just like you. We ensure that we've played games through to the end so that we can give you a proper verdict – and one that saves you from wasting money.





DONKEY KONGA

Bashing and clapping – this bongo bemani beat-'em-up will have you hooting with laughter and screeching ape-like with frustration. P50



WARNING! SPOILERS AHOY! OUR REVIEWS CONTAIN SENSITIVE INFO!



PAC-MAN VS

Fed up of seeing your much-loved old games ruined by being 'updated'? Nintendo show the rest of the world how to take an old favourite and really make it better. P58



PSO 3: C.A.R.D. REVOLUTION

We deal you in with all the details of the latest *Phantasy Star* game. It's in Japanese, but keep with us 'cos we might just be able to sort that out for you… P64



PRINCE OF PERSIA THE SANDS OF TIME

He's been leaping over spiky pits and avoiding traps for nearly 15 years, but he doesn't look a day older. In fact, the middle-eastern monarch looks better than ever. P66



ROGUE OPS

Nikki Connors takes more than a few style tips from Joanna Dark on her way to avenging her dead family (ooh, check out the innovative storyline). Meet her on… P40

ALSO REVIEWED

HOW IT WORKS...

Our reviews are the most comprehensive on Earth. We devote more pages to the games you want to know about, and give you loads of detail. We don't rest until we've played a game enough to pinpoint ALL of its strengths and weaknesses, and be able to deliver the most honest, no-nonsense verdicts around.



NFL STREET

'Gridiron without the grid' is how Kittsy explained it. We reckon a 'street' version of American football sounds dangerous. P32



R: RACING EVOLUTION

Namco give their old Ridge Racer series a fillip with this graphically-challenged tale of a foxy paramedic turned racing pro. Slick. P60

OUR SCORING SYSTEM

0-24

■ Crushingly awful, massively dull. Rest assured, this is crud.

25-49

■ Disappointing, stashed with faults and likely to be short on any quality.

50-74

■ Some great bits, some not-so-great bits. Decent but definitely problems.

75-89

■ Great fun, brilliantly programmed at times, but probably flawed.

90+



■ Rarely awarded, you'll know a 90+ is essential. Buy with confidence...

THE SCORE BAR

■ The verdict explained for you...

PROS AND CONS

Because we think it's important to provide you with balanced reviews, we'll sum up the game simply with some plus and minus points.



- Funnier than bears.
- Make entertaining noises.
- Touch themselves.



- Nasty habit of flinging poo.
- Bears are cuter.
- Get stuck in balls.

IF YOU LIKE THIS...

Not all games are good (unsurprisingly) – so you'll be wanting to know what the alternative is. We'll provide suggestions here.

IF YOU LIKE THIS...

Pokémon Smash
Shuntsoft
NGC/10, 36%
In need of working out some real frustration? Punch a Pokémon in its fat neck!



VISUALS AND SOUNDS

Gamecube sends PS2 packing. Do the visuals and sounds show this?

MASTERY

How well does the game make use of the Cube's startling hardware?

LIFESPAN

Will it last you a lifetime or a couple of minutes? This is where you'll find out for sure...

9 VISUALS
Monkeys are hilarious. You'll love watching them.

2 SOUNDS
Ook? OOOOOK? Eeek? Put some effort in, simians.

8 MASTERY
They use their bodies well, but can't cope with complex tools.

3 LIFESPAN
Poor monkeys, the little ones don't last very long. *Sniff*

VERDICT

We don't throw scores around – we give a game what it deserves. Here you will find the definitive verdict as to whether you should bother purchasing a game.

VERDICT
Everybody loves *Monkeys* in small doses, but we wouldn't want to spend much time with them.

NGC
66

MEET THE NGC TEAM

What is the sound of one team clapping? A total racket, that's what.



MARCUS
This DK mask (thanks, Rex) has enabled Marcus to continue stalking Charlotte Uhlenbroek. Next tactic: baring his mandrill-like ass at the lass.



PAUL
Paul's band has supported Catatonia and Reef – needless to say going anywhere near Geraint's bongos would lose him his musical cred. Mmm.



KITTSY
Kittsy loved the idea of a peripheral you could actually hit. He's since been beavering away to create one that bleeds for stealth games.



GERAINT
Geraint's horror at hearing the DK Rap again was a joy to behold – it actually makes him physically sick, y'see. And his barf stinks of 'nanas. Bongo!



MIM
Mim cheats at Konga, banging both drums simultaneously. This is because she can't cope with complex notions like 'left' and 'right'. Oh Mim. Y'idiot.

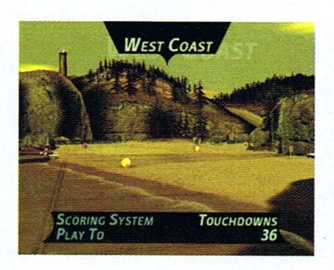


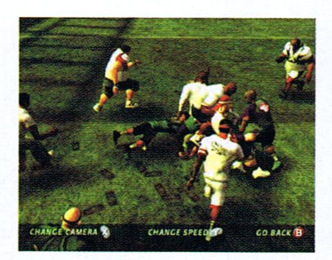
EFFY
Effy may be Latin American, but he has all the rhythm of a Welshman. The only salsa you should accept from him is the sort you dip Pringles into.

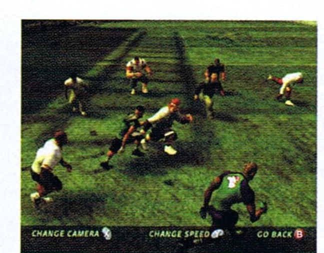
"Entertainment in intense, bite-sized chunks"



△ A quick hand-off to our running back and we're away. You can over-egg this as much as you like, passing the ball from player to player until you don't have a clue what's going on. By that time you'll be lying under 25st of defender.

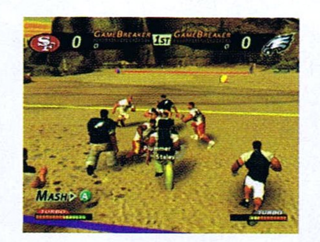


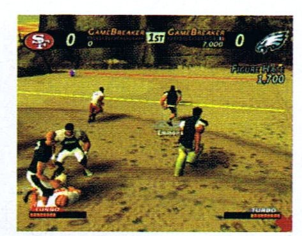






△ Use the C-stick before the snap to see which buttons are assigned to your receivers. In this situation you'd go for receiver B, right?



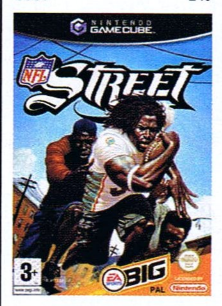




△ Crunch! You lose, loser.

INFO BURST

PUBLISHER	EA
DEVELOPER	EA
RELEASE DATE	JAN 30TH
PLAYERS	1-4
MEM CARD PAGES	3+
GBA LINK-UP	NO
SURROUND SOUND	NO
WIDESCREEN	YES
COST	£40



NFL STREET

Yo, homies! Erm... You and me gonna play us some *mad* ball. Word.



The thud and blunder of a mismatched game of *Madden NFL*, the godfather of American football sims, is something few people are going to enjoy. When one player is way too good at the game for a fair contest, there's no way to give the uninitiated a chance to win the odd game or two.

This is where *NFL Street* comes in, or at least that's what we thought after spending an unhealthy amount of the summer enjoying the brilliant *NBA Street*, its basketball cousin released earlier in the year.

But, you see, street-style American football isn't nearly so accessible as the basketball version. The stop-start nature of the sport is ideal for strategic thinking and planning the kind of textbook manouevres that will either leave your opponent cursing his luck or applauding your skill. Simplify it and make it more like an arcade game, which is what *NFL Street* does, and the strategy side of thing is necessarily dumbed down. However you still have a very stoppy-starty sort of sport at the heart of it all.

No matter how quickly you try to hurry things along, it's always going to halt every few seconds so you can choose your next play. And after that you have to pull back the camera for the customary look at your receiving options, wait for the ball to be hiked, and make your play. Even then, the action might not last longer than it takes for a big linebacker to bypass the linemen and have his wicked way with your quarterback.

Compared to other, more free-flowing, sports, American football offers its entertainment in intense, bite-sized chunks, spread over what can be a tedious length of time. And so it's not ideal for arcade games, you might think.



FIDDLER ON THE HOOF

Despite being a simple rendition of a very complicated sport, there's nothing particularly easy about the game's controls. You'll have to master just as many moves and button combos as you would in a more serious sim like* Madden NFL*, which is why* NFL Street *can be hard for non-NFL enthusiasts to get into. The depth of play justifies the effort.

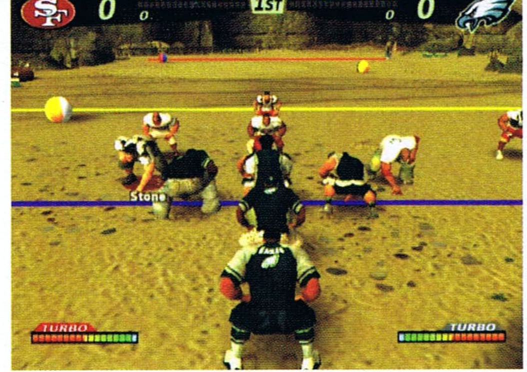
In fact, there's only ever been one really excellent arcade-style gridiron title – Midway's *NFL Blitz* – and *NFL Street* simply isn't in the same class if what you want is a spot of quick, uncomplicated gaming.

IT'S IN THE GAME

What it does have going for it, far more so than *NFL Blitz*, is the kind of variety and depth you'd normally associate with a serious sim.

It's jam-packed with game modes and challenges, there are more unlockable rewards than we could possibly count, and once you learn to do without the computer assistance offered by default you'll find you have a surprisingly high level of control over your individual players.

The game is seven versus seven, with no time limit, no play clock, and only the endzones and first down markers to clutter the field. The pitch is very short,



△ Avoid the beach balls if you don't want to look a fool.



△ Fumbles are good, and quite frequent. We've seen five successive fumbles and turnovers in the course of a melée.



△ Sometimes it pays just to run the ball rather than wait for a receiver to become available. Your quarterback can spend ages looking for an upfield pass without noticing the holes ahead.

HOME BREWED

Like all self-respecting sports games, NFL Street is full of the old nip and tuck.



IN IT TO WIN IT

Complete various parts of the massive Challenge mode to win new items such as these special gloves that make you catch better. All very useful.



FREAK OUT

Then you hop into the customisation screen to kit your players out with the latest gear. You can keep adding bits as you win them. This stuff is important.



FATTENING UP

You also get attribute points to spend on stuff like better stats for your players. You can make them bigger and fatter too, at a cost.



REGISTRATION

Ooh, registration's what you need. Assign your created player to your team so he can play (or just pick an existing NFL star from the roster).



LEAGUE OF NATIONS

After a couple of hours of creating and tweaking you'll have your very own rainbow team with no matching shirts and a poor sense of discipline.

so you should be able to get most of the way from one end to the other with just two or three running plays. Warm up that passing arm and you can span the endzones with a single throw.

There's no kicking to mess around with, either. You can't punt the ball if you're in trouble (there's no point booting it around on such a small pitch) and there are no goal posts.

To get a point after touchdown you always have to cross the line again. It's two points for a passing PAT and one for a rush. There are no other rules of any real significance.

EASY DOES IT

So *NFL Street* is about as simple as an American football game can get without going so far it loses its connection with the spirit of the sport. It's simple in concept but very involving and challenging once you sit down with it and try to crack some of the game modes on offer.

At its most basic, all you need to do is throw the ball, hope the computer positions your receiver in more or less the correct place, then either catch the ball and get crunched, or miss and try all over again. You can win the early games against the computer using those tactics but it's hardly the most satisfying way to play.

There are plenty of other moves to learn and, like *NBA Street*, you earn style points for playing in the most flamboyant way you can. Holding the left trigger activates special 'style' moves, much like *NBA Street*'s special tricks. The idea is to waltz past clumsy defenders and skip through tackles while waving to the fans and performing some general showboating. Pressing other buttons while you're in this mode makes the player do whatever special moves he's been assigned, and if you manage to string together several of these and finish it all off with a touchdown you'll be on the road to big points.

There are plenty of other things you can do to earn points. Interceptions and other turnovers get you a few points,

"IT'S ABOUT AS SIMPLE AS AN AMERICAN FOOTBALL GAME CAN GET WITHOUT LOSING TOUCH WITH THE SPIRIT OF THE SPORT"



CELEBRATE GOOD TIMES

American football players aren't afraid of rubbing it in when they're on top. They're the most graceless winners you're likely to find outside of the English Premiership, and will shake their booty in a horribly undignified manner after scoring touchdowns, intercepting passes, sacking quarterbacks, or simply because they feel like it.

△ Just a bunch of blokes on the beach.

△ Mind your quarterback doesn't get his head wedged up a lineman.

△ You can shift the players in your basic formations, so the quickest ones can stay out wide, where they're best.

BY THE BOOK

You're limited to a fairly small selection of running and passing plays. There are also 'trick' plays, which involve passing the ball behind the line of scrimmage to create confusion in the defence. Of course they probably saw what you picked, but you can try to fool them by moving the cursor and switching playbooks after you've chosen.



△ It's a nice touch that the defender holds his head in his hands after making the elementary mistake that allowed the little guy to score.

CHALLENGE THIS

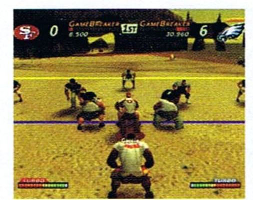
In the NFL Challenge mode you can take on a series of computer opponents, just like in NBA Street, to unlock new places to play. There are also specific challenges which tend to be much shorter than a full-length match to 36 points. Complete tasks such as beating a team while making two sacks or completing a lateral during a touchdown play and you get some cool stuff.

sackings score quite highly with the judges, and taking players down with the biggest possible hits is well worth your while. If you can manage to find enough space on the field, pitching lateral passes sends the points meter crazy. Combine any of those big-scoring plays with a few style moves and a score at the end of it and you can get almost enough points to max out your Gamebreaker meter in one go.

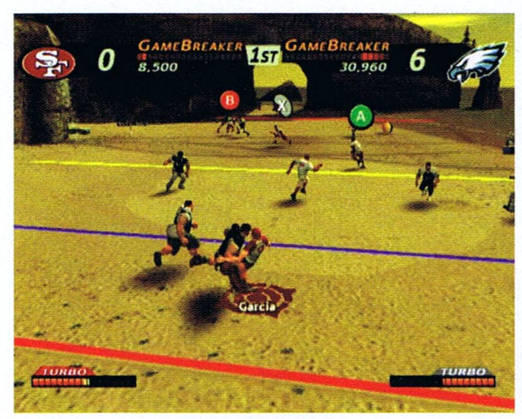
Gamebreakers are the real purpose of style points, assuming you're not playing to be the first to a preset total. When your Gamebreaker meter starts flashing you can send your entire team into a higher state of being. The screen turns a bluish colour, the players start glowing, and many impossible moves become available to you. You're practically unstoppable like this, especially since the effect lasts until the ball is turned over. If you use your Gamebreaker while defending you've got a 90% chance of preventing the other team from scoring. Use it while on the attack and you have a free touchdown plus the extra points.

> **"THE SCREEN TURNS A BLUISH COLOUR, THE PLAYERS START GLOWING, AND IMPOSSIBLE MOVES BECOME AVAILABLE"**

You'll need to master all this as quickly as possible because the computer challenges quickly hot up.




△ Wherever you play, expect crunching tackles.



△ The player on the X-button is wide open. Unfortunately the quarterback is about to eat a forearm smash.



△ The stylised look of the players reminds us of a streetwise *Sega Soccer Slam.* You can customise them with all sorts of stuff, but sadly there's no option to make them wear dresses or clown suits.

BREAKING THE GAME

This is sure to spice things up...



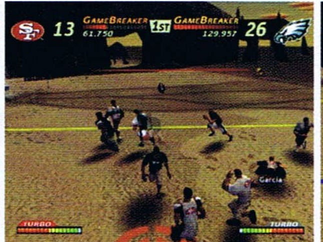
SCORE...

Racking up touchdowns earns you style points. Racking up touchdowns while doing special moves and waving your arms around earns even more points.



SCORE AGAIN...

Keep on doing this and your points meter will max out. This can be an end in itself, but normally this is your signal to start scoring for fun.



BREAK IT...

With the meter at its peak you can activate your Gamebreaker move. Your opponent breathes a heavy sigh and prepares to be punished.



BREAK IT AGAIN...

The Gamebreaker makes your entire team superhuman for the duration of your possession. They're basically unstoppable, and you'll score at will.

The objectives for unlocking subsequent stages become increasingly tough and are divided up from 'no skills' through 'mad' and all the way to 'legendary'. And there we were, thinking mad skillz were as good as you could get.

THE REAL DEAL

The game is packed full of cartoon versions of real NFL players, complete with signature moves and celebrations, plus a good handful of original creations. You can edit them all as you see fit, spending the reward points you earn defeating other teams in the one-player modes to beef them up, dress them in lovely new uniforms or enhance particular abilities.

Your customised team of misfits and mutants can then be sent into any other game modes, earning yet more reward points and maybe even winning the odd star player or two from defeated opponents. There are eight separate leagues, with a specialised playing field for each one.

As a one-player game it's definitely on the larger side of 'massive'. Beating everything is going to take ages although at the end of the day it's just a series of regular matches.

MISSING IN ACTION

We could have done with some more extras or something to break it all up a bit, like a wacky training mode. Making running backs charge through walls to demonstrate how to break tackles, or passing a ticking bomb to show you how to do laterals. That sort of thing would have been most welcome, and totally in keeping with the style of the game. Maybe they'll sort something out for the sequel. As it stands you have to learn the game the hard way, and that's the basis of our major criticism of it.

Even as a seven-a-side game there's hardly any space on the field to try out your moves before you have to deal with a defender. So you try something quick, maybe you don't time it quite right, and you have to wait for your player to peel himself off the floor before going through the process of selecting a play and starting over.

For some reason *NFL Blitz* felt like it had less waiting time between plays. After the whistle had blown Midway's game also gave you a short time to pile in and administer some afters, which meant there was still something fun to do if the play ended early.

NFL Street doesn't have any of that, nor does it have *Blitz*'s custom play editor, and it's far more difficult to learn than *NBA Street* – still the benchmark for accessible sports games as far as we're concerned. But it's still an American footie game of the highest quality. Just not one for the UK masses, like we'd hoped.

MARTIN KITTS



SURFACE TENSION

The type of playing surface is supposed to affect the speed and agility of the players but we didn't notice a huge amount of difference between, say, concrete and sand pitches. It would have been cool if there were some appropriate injuries, such as players getting all mashed up if they're tackled on concrete or thrown through fences in the urban arenas.



- Fast and fun.
- Chunky graphics.
- Plenty to unlock.
- Customisation.

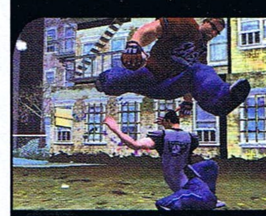


- Not very accessible for NFL game novices.
- Games can last ages if you're no good.



IF YOU LIKE THIS...

NBA Street Vol. 2
EA
NGC/84 88%
Fantastically playable basketball game with great music and easy controls.



7 VISUALS

Fourteen big, expressive players. No slowdown.

7 SOUNDS

Typical selection of rockin' tunes and grunty voices.



6 MASTERY

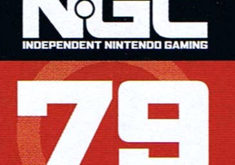
Doesn't do much that *NFL Blitz* didn't do years ago, really.

9 LIFESPAN

The Challenge mode is massive, plus it's a four-player game.

VERDICT

It's the American football game that does what little *Madden NFL* doesn't. You'll like it if you're a fan of the sport; otherwise...



"Defeat an invasion of evil Gotcha Borgs"



▲ The first boss – this fire-breathing dragon – is absolutely huge and very impressive with it.



▲ This little ninja fellow is weak, but agile and strong at close quarters.



▲ The map is divided into areas you can enter in any order.



▲ The on-screen chaos can make things a little disorientating

GOTCHA FORCE

They're tiny but mighty! Capcom's miniature arena battler invites you to catch 'em all…

INF… BURST…

PUBLISHER	CAPCOM
DEVELOPER	CAPCOM
RELEASE DATE	20TH FEB
PLAYERS	1-4
MEMORY CARD PAGES	10
GBA LINK-UP	NO
SURROUND SOUND	NO
WIDESCREEN	NO
COST	£40



With the Japanese release of *Custom Robo* still some time away, we were looking to *Gotcha Force* to tide us over. Early impressions did little to satisfy us, unfortunately. To begin with, 'Gotcha Borgs' (the robots themselves) aside, it's visually very bland. Yes, it's bright, yes, it's colourful, but the textures are pretty flat and the environments do little to inspire. Still, we suppose it's not too important given the subject matter. You assume the role of a young boy who, by taking command of his collection of toys, has to defeat an invasion of evil Gotcha Borgs who are overrunning the town.

GOTCHA CATCH 'EM ALL

On starting out you're faced with a map of a town, which has been broken up into sections. Areas where there's anything of interest going on are indicated by an exclamation mark and a little icon depicting the kind of opponent you'll be facing – it could be either a human challenger or an evil Gotcha Borg force.

Select a location and you'll be whisked off to a configuration screen where you can select a fighter from your stock of Gotcha Borgs, a little like choosing your monster in *Pokémon*, before beginning a battle.

You start off with a single Gotcha Borg, a toy that looks like a Transformer in its robotic form. The B button fires off a volley of five single shots that, once depleted, have to recharge before becoming available again. The A button gives your Borg a finite amount of boost (again rechargable) while X fires off a special attack unique to your Borg.

Aiming is pretty much taken care of for you, with a *Zelda*-style lock-on function that allows you to keep track of your target at all times.



SUPER MODELS

The one aspect where the game truly shines (visually) is the incredible amount of Borgs to collect – there are more than 200 in all. Each is not only unique and beautifully modelled, but it's clear that a great deal of thought has been put into their different abilities. Much like Pokémon, some might not have brilliant speed or attacking power but will have abilities like stopping attacks and healing.

GOTCHA FORCE

Prepare to be assimilated!



△ No matter where you go, the lock-on function allows you to track the enemies.



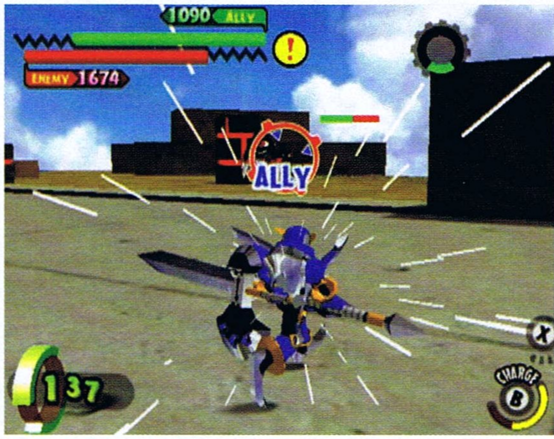




△ This Borg is devastatingly powerful…



△ …unlike this long-range gunman.



△ Borgs have different attacks. This one needs to charge his up.

THE RULES OF ENGAGEMENT

With hundreds of Borg to choose from, you'll need to get it right…



TEAM UP

Allies are folk you've already battled and beaten, who then join your cause. Allies have different abilities, like healing and air attacks, so choose them wisely.



PICK YOUR BORGS

Borgs you collect have a certain cost that draws from a pool of points. You can either choose a couple of super-strong Borgs or more, but slightly weaker, toys.



FIGHT ON

Levels normally consist of generic Evil Gotcha Borgs, and multiple, more specialised, Borgs. The key to victory is to concentrate on the toughest one first.



WINNER!

To win, you have to get rid of your enemy's entire stock of Borgs. Part of the strategy is knowing which Borgs are best used at certain stages in battle.

Each stage requires you to use these attacks to fend off a set number of enemy borgs, all of which you battle against in oversized locations like bedrooms, backyards, school classrooms and so on.

n this respect the visuals adequately serve their purpose, giving you a sound impression that you're fighting with little toys. In fact, after you've been playing for around an hour or so, you can easily forgive the rather basic, dumbed-down feel of the game. It keeps the action moving along nice and smoothly, which is no mean feat considering how chaotic things can get as you push further through the game's main Story mode.

There are however, a number of issues that really hamper things. First, the camera can be extremely confusing, snapping backwards and forwards and up and down as your target zooms around the arena. Granted, you never lose sight of your opponent, but these frequent periods of confusion leave you helpless and, more often than not, badly damaged.

Furthermore, the fighting and the control of the toys is pretty soulless. Aside from choosing between your different Gotcha Borgs, there's very little in the way of strategy and even less in the way of skill required to come out on top. The upshot of all this is that even when the game becomes more difficult, you never really find yourself doing anything particularly different in order to win. Repetition soon sets in. And your interest begins to wane.

> **"THE DIFFERENT GOTCHA BORGS POSSESS A WIDE RANGE OF ABILITIES, LETTING YOU FORM UNIQUE TEAMS OF FIGHTERS"**



MODENESS

Once you've managed to fight your way through the game's Story mode, there are a number of extra modes to try. Challenge is an extremely tough series of battles against multiple Borgs, while the game's superb four-player mode will undoubtedly prove to be a favourite if you and a bunch of mates have accumulated a good set of Borgs.

BORG TO BE WILD

It's a flawed experience, then – but actually there's still a great deal to like about it. The *Pokémon*-style collection aspect does have a certain appeal, and the many different Gotcha Borgs possess a wide range of abilities, allowing you to form unique teams of fighters. It's this, combined with the game's Versus mode, that ultimately gives the game its longevity and, assuming you can ignore its glaring faults, it will ultimately provide you with plenty of entertainment.

GERAINT EVANS



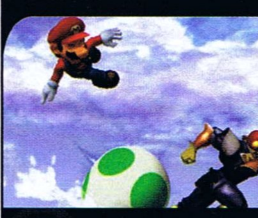
- Some excellent Borg designs.
- Simple fun that's great for the young.



- Repetitive and uninvolving battles.
- Never truly exciting at any point.



Smash Bros Melee
Nintendo
NGC/68 91%
Superb, Nintendo themed, four-player battler – but it's not really in proper 3D.



6 VISUALS

Basic but colourful. Great looking and animated Borgs tho'.

6 SOUNDS

Pretty forgettable tunes and repetitive speech samples.

7 MASTERY

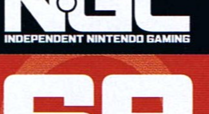
Hardly eye-popping, but the game is very fast and fluid. Nice.

8 LIFESPAN

Loads of Borgs to collect and plenty of different modes to try.

VERDICT

Arena-battling collect-'em-up, that'll hold the interest of the younger gamer but simply isn't refined or substantial enough for everyone else.

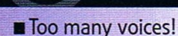




TALK OF THE TOON
Most of the characters you meet have 'problems' that need 'sorting'. They'll reward you if you save Tweety from Sylvester, and that kind of thing...

BAD ACME
Try out the Acme gadgets – here you throw exploding chickens at targets.

QUICK, CHANGE!
Find a changing room door to get Bugs a new costume. Here he's a spy – so he can see and hit a thief covered in invisible ink. You can see the thief's outline as normal Bugs but you can't hit him. Crap.



- Good voices.
- Decent animation.
- Simple puzzles for children.



- Too many voices!
- Inconsistent game world.
- Bad clipping.

IF YOU LIKE THIS...

Super Mario Sunshine
Nintendo
NGC/73 96%
A game young gamers will fall in love with – and adults will adore it, too.



6 VISUALS
A bit of clipping and a woozy camera. Otherwise okay.

6 SOUNDS
Genuine voices. Shame they're unfunny, though.

3 MASTERY
Some low-res cut-scenes and cack collision detection.

4 LIFESPAN
Lots of stuff to collect in each level – but can you be arsed? Mmm?

VERDICT
The duck and the 'wabbit' – together at last. Okay for young Looney Tunes fans who're new to this sort of thing. A waste of cash for the rest.



56

INFO BURST

PUBLISHER	EA
DEVELOPER	WARTHOG
RELEASE DATE	30TH JAN
PLAYERS	1
MEMORY CARD PAGES	2
GBA LINK-UP	NO
SURROUND SOUND	NO
WIDESCREEN	NO
COST	£30

LOONEY TUNES BACK IN ACTION

A middling monkey-collecting platformer. And t-t-t-that's all folks...



Based on the forthcoming Warner Bros film of the same name (released on 13th February), what you've got here is a zone-by-zone free-roaming platformer for baby gamers starring Daffy Duck and Bugs Bunny. The 'unique' feature is the way you can switch between them both at any time during the game with the tap of a button. You can also whack the mailboxes you find around the gameworld to receive the other character in the post.

There are situations where each character's own skills come into play – Daffy can be crushed or swallowed whole without any ill effects, while the stinking rabbit can burrow through the soil and change costumes – and at other times you'll need to use them in tandem (usually to stand on a pair of pressure pads in order to unlock new areas). It's all very basic – a race around the world (the Warner Bros backlot, Paris, the African jungle...) to find the Blue Monkey Diamond, collecting coins, monkeys, Acme gadgets and more. You know the score.

Anyone listening to you play will soon come to the conclusion that it's the most irritating game in the world, though. The music plinks about – but it's the constant chatter of the Looney Tunes mob as you run around that just creates a cacophony of confusion. They've got the voice talent and boy are they going to use it. Luckily you can turn the 'banter volume' down.

It's not going to blow you away. It's not an absolute abortion. It's, y'know, *all right*. And definitely not for anyone over the age of 12...

MARCUS HAWKINS

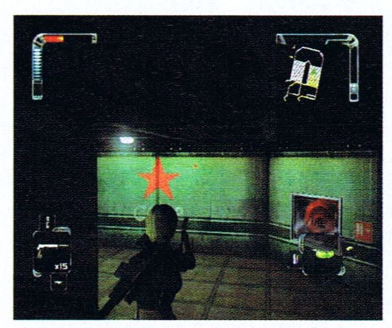


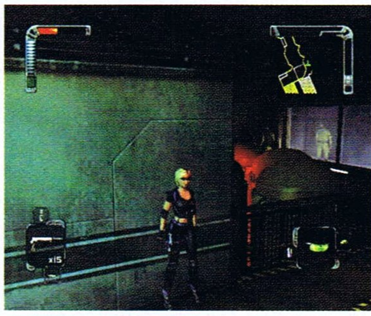
DID YOU KNOW? The sweetness of orange complements both roasted rabbit and duck – don't forget to add thinly sliced oranges as a garnish to the finished dish.


△ Dead people. On the floor. Yes.

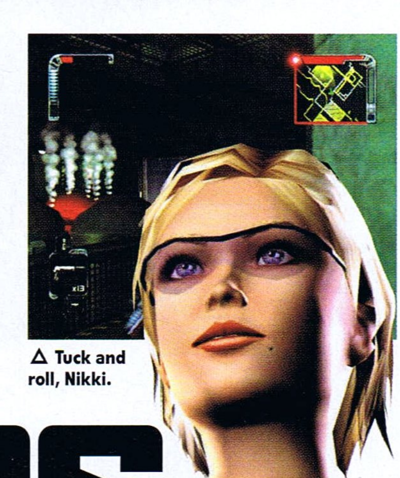



△ Nikki Connors, expanding her cultural experience. There's an awful lot of guards patrolling this museum; those dinosaur bones must be reeeaaal valuable. Or perhaps they had a tip-off about all the spies creeping around.


△ Inevitably, there's levels where the Soviets play a hefty part. Best shoot 'em.

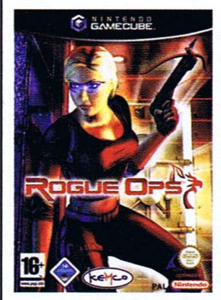

△ Nikki can flatten herself against walls just like any other stealth game operative.


△ She can even pop out and squeeze off some bullets. Handy, that, in a pinch.


△ Tuck and roll, Nikki.



PUBLISHER	KEMCO
DEVELOPER	BITS STUDIOS
RELEASE DATE	6TH FEB
PLAYERS	1
MEMORY CARD PAGES	6
GBA LINK-UP	NO
SURROUND SOUND	YES
WIDESCREEN	NO
COST	£40



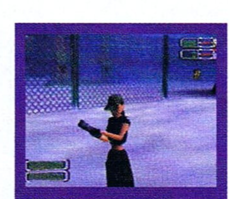
ROGUE OPS

Can Bits Studios' latest better Perfect Dark? Does Kittsy like teddy bears and kittens?


Since when did stealth games become so popular? You can't move for 'em nowadays. It appears that espionage is the flavour of the month (and last month, and probably next month too), although it's taken a while to filter through since the possibilities of sneaking around were first pioneered by *GoldenEye* and *Metal Gear Solid*.

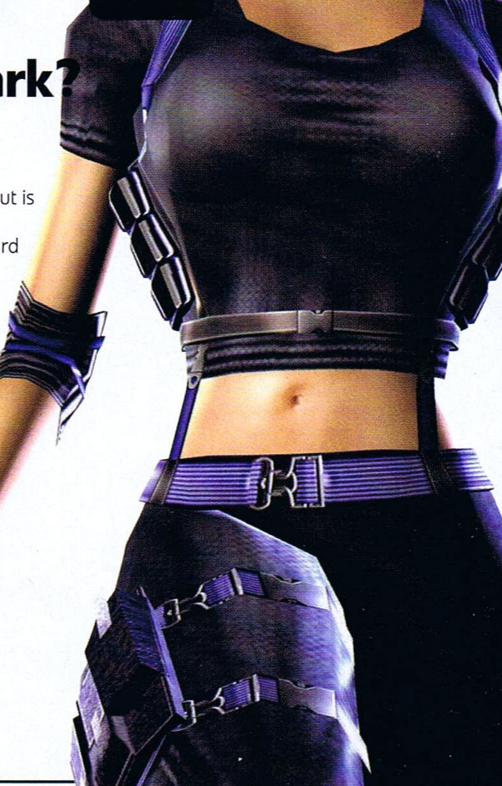
Rogue Ops is the latest sneak-'em-up to hit Gamecube, developed by the same good folk behind the sweartastic *Die Hard Vendetta*. Given Rare's move to Xbox development, it wouldn't be a complete flight of fancy to suggest that this heroine-led game could be seen as an attempt to fill the void left behind by *Perfect Dark*. Like that game, this has got a no-nonsense female lead, a wealth of gadgets, objective-based gameplay and plenty of guns. But is that enough?

Sadly, no. *Rogue Ops* tries hard – and when it's good, it's effective enough – but it's ultimately a mish-mash of other games hobbled by clunky control and some fiddly game mechanics. It's unimaginative and derivative. Indeed, given the number of elements Bits Studios have half-inched from other games, *Rogue Ops* at times feels like an inferior clone of, say, *Splinter Cell*. That can't be a good thing, not when the



RIQA

Waaaay back at E3 1999 Nintendo were showing a brief video clip of an N64 game called Riqa, developed by Bits Studios. We saw a baseball-capped Lara Croft-alike running and shooting. Could Riqa, which never appeared, have turned into Rogue Ops? Both games feature the same targeting icon, so maybe… Or maybe not.





TOYS TO MEN

Nikki's got plenty of gadgets. Two of the best are the infra-red scanner and a widget that copies people's eye-patterns to fool retinal scanners.

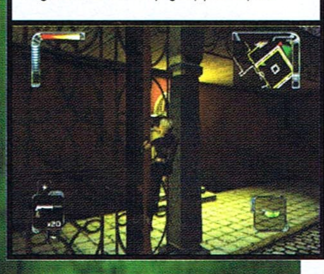
GUN FOR ALL THE FAMILY

Nikki's not restricted to pistols and rifles. She also gets to hurl shuriken around, throw grenades and electrocute people with taser-style shock-machines.



ONE JUMP OR TWO

You'll sidle along walls, hang by your fingers and shin up grapple-ropes.





YOU'RE NIKKED

Meet Nikki Connors. She's hornswaggled into a life of espionage when her family are killed, and is trying to bring down the Omega 19 organisation.

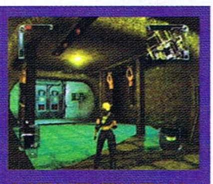
BAD BOYS

Most of the time Nikki's up against identikit goons armed with guns, who like to meander around brainlessly until our heroine is right under their noses. Sometimes you'll encounter civilians, however, and you cannot under any circumstances kill them. Pah. Where's the fun in that?

majority of the games *Rogue Ops* references are far and away more enjoyable. Why play *Rogue Ops* when *Splinter Cell* is already out? It's a question you'll ask yourself many times when playing *Rogue Ops*, and sadly, by the time you've finished playing it, the answer is all too obvious.

As a stealth game, *Rogue Ops* is half-successful. You can hide in lockers and shadows (stay still for long enough in the dark and you effectively become invisible), pick up and hide enemy bodies, and padding up behind enemies allows you to neutralise them with ease. All very good. But there isn't enough incentive to be stealthy all the time – certainly, it becomes more important later in the game, but most of the time you're better off taking down a guard with a pistol shot to the head rather than sneaking past them. We found there was only a handful of instances where leaving a body where it could be discovered triggered an alarm, and the enemy AI isn't too impressive, as evidenced on several occasions where guards milled about in front of us instead of shooting straight away.

Rogue Ops can also be maddeningly, hair-tearingly frustrating. Like *Splinter Cell*, it's a very linear experience (that's not inherently a bad thing, by the way – *Eternal Darkness* is a hugely linear game but disguises the player's lack of freedom through magnificent story and direction). *Splinter Cell* was, in many ways, like an inordinately fancy puzzle game. It basically boiled down to trying everything out in order to find the correct way to get from point A to point B. *Rogue Ops* is very much the same, but far clumsier and much less elegant. Most of its eight levels are sliced into bite-sized chunks and when you've puzzled out the bit that you're doing

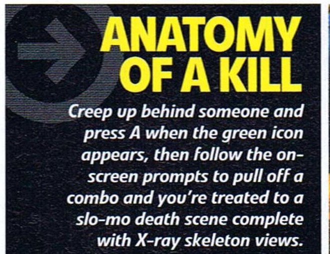


LIGHT SHOW

For all the poor bits in Rogue Ops, there's a couple of spectacularly clever ones. Take, for instance, the basement of the first level. The floor is awash with motion-sensitive laser beams that set off a machine gun. The solution? Shoot down the bodies hanging on hooks from the ceiling – they'll give you space to get through and the gun'll pepper them with bullets instead of you. Brilliant.

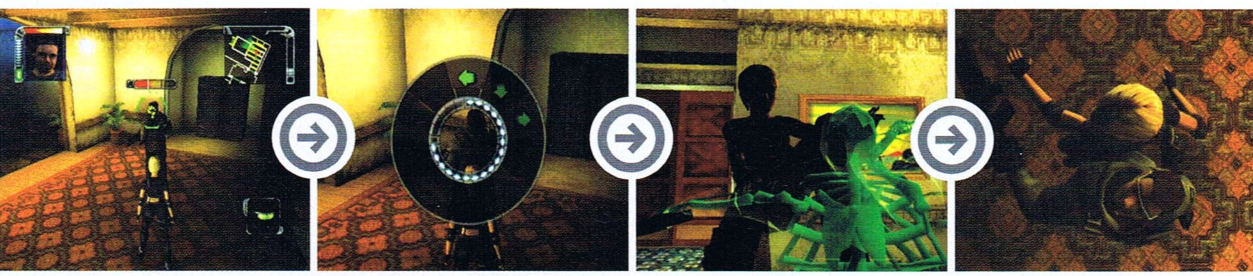
"MOST OF THE TIME YOU'RE BETTER OFF TAKING DOWN A GUARD WITH A HEAD SHOT"

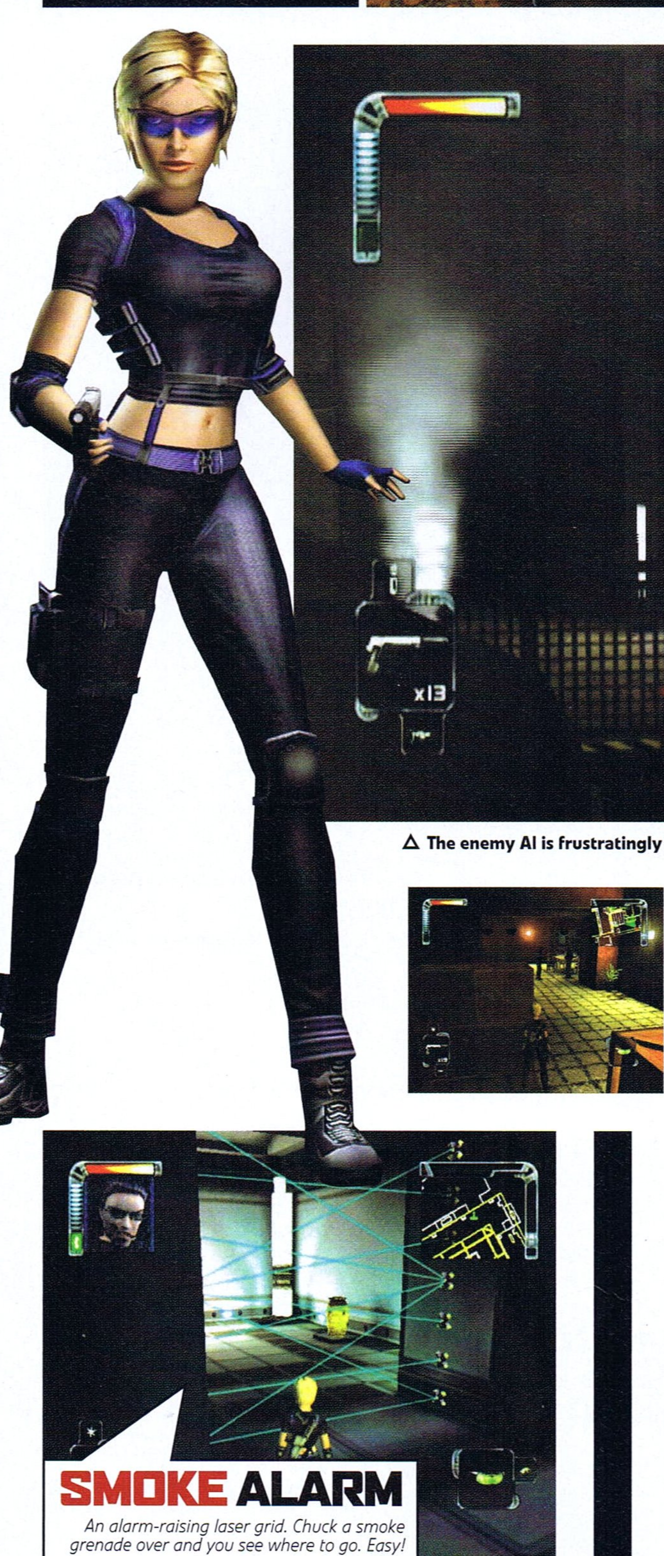
"Often simply patience-shredding"



ANATOMY OF A KILL

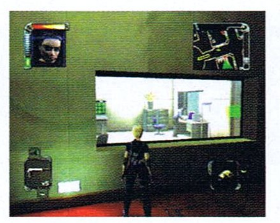
Creep up behind someone and press A when the green icon appears, then follow the on-screen prompts to pull off a combo and you're treated to a slo-mo death scene complete with X-ray skeleton views.





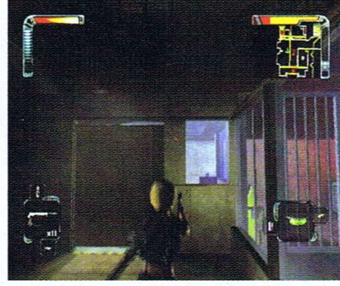


Δ The enemy AI is frustratingly inconsistent. They'll often bumble around when they should be shooting.

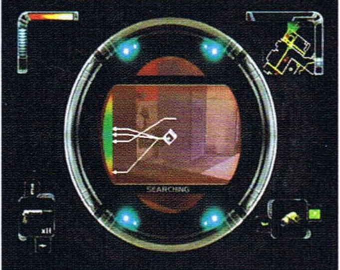




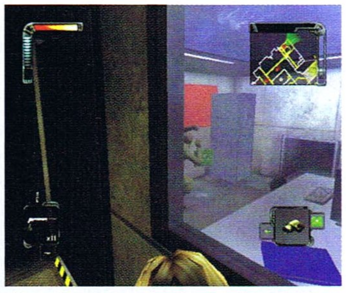




Δ Shoot out the window, if you like. But you can't climb through it, confusingly.



Δ This retinal scanner is one of the more enjoyable gadgets in the game.



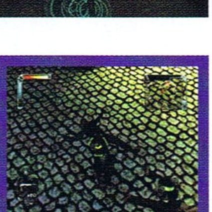
Δ Look at the cowering Russkie. It'd be cruel to shoot him, but, well, you know…

SMOKE ALARM

An alarm-raising laser grid. Chuck a smoke grenade over and you see where to go. Easy!

(by, say, discovering how to see what code a security guard is punching into a console), you move onto the next. This piecemeal progress is annoying because in most cases you're not allowed to go back to previous areas, and all too often it's easy enough to get stuck on what you're doing with no way out.

Trying to find out exactly what you have to do next is often simply patience-shredding. The context-sensitive action icon (a good idea, in theory, and effective most of the time) is only activated once you've held down L to 'view' and passed the cursor over, say, a switch. When you've got to do that over four rooms to try and find a door code it takes a supreme test of will to prevent Wavebird/window interfacing. This is all exacerbated by the fact that when enemies are alerted they stay alert. There's no returning to routine patrol behaviour, for instance. While this makes perfect sense (hey, when you've seen someone sneaking around with a gun you're hardly going to sit down and read a good book) it also means you're denied the chance to re-attempt something.



THE JOY OF CONTEXT

Rogue Ops offers a catch-all context-sensitive A button. Annoyingly, although you have to hold down L to activate the 'view' icon, passing it over objects will show you if there's anything to be done, such as being able to hang from a rail or jump up to a ledge. Remember to crouch to search a dead body, though, or else you'll simply pick 'em up.

KICK IN THE BUTTON

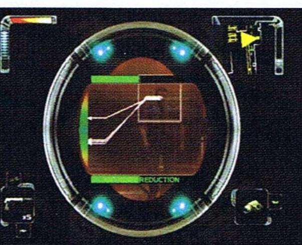
All too often the solutions to the problems are fairly elementary (if not well-signposted), but the clunkiness of the various game mechanics involved make things more complicated than they should be (as another example, Bits Studios have tried to take advantage of the analogue shoulder buttons – pressing R draws or holsters a weapon and 'clicking' it fires. A nice system, and admittedly a great idea, but one that inevitably leads to you holstering your pistol in a firefight

A DAY IN THE SECRET LIFE

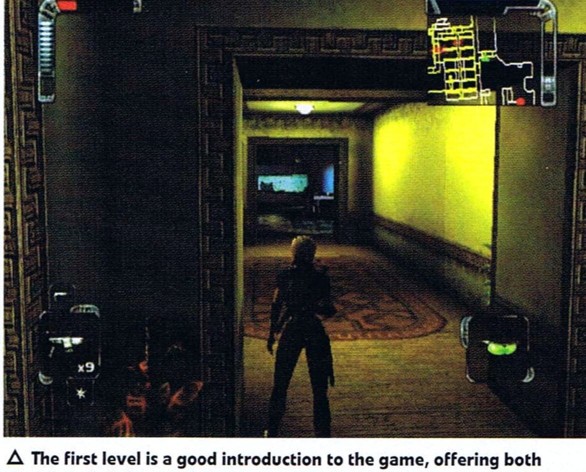
It's all work and no play for Nikki.

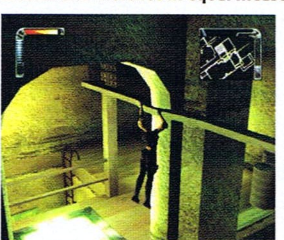

Hmm. Stuck in a museum. You've got to steal a statue and replace it with a fake, all the while making sure the security guards remain unharmed.

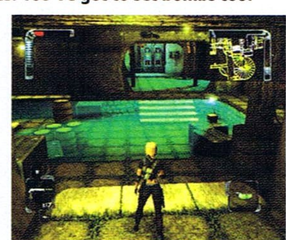

Infiltrate a secure area by sneaking after a guard, then overload the generator to short out a laser that was obstructing your progress.

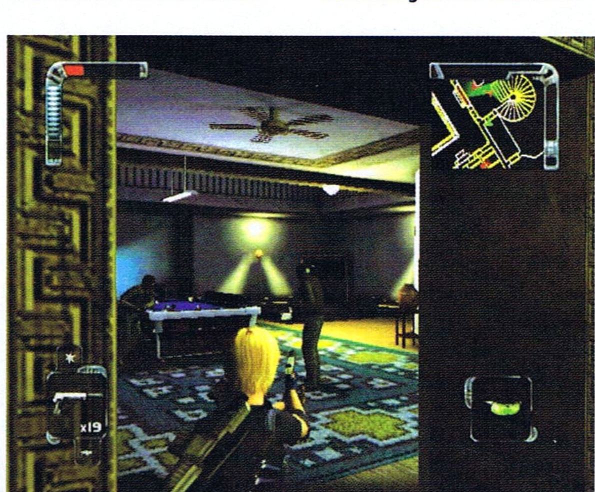

Scan this guard's eyes and use the data to bypass a retinal scanner, tiptoeing around the security cams and priceless exhibits. If you're seen it's mission over.

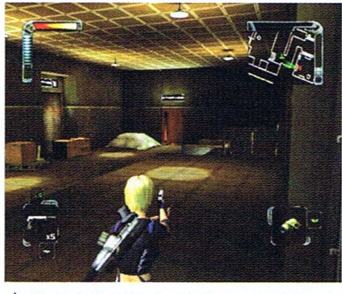

Step in these beams and you're stuffed, but overhead there's a point that will accept a grapple hook, and there's an air duct. It's easy to see what comes next…


△ The first level is a good introduction to the game, offering both stealth and violence in equal measures. You've got to set bombs too.


△ The Training mode gets you used to all the different moves.


△ The light on the floor sets off a machine gun. How to avoid it?


△ Two guards here, not doing particularly well at the old guarding business due to the fact that they're playing pool. Kill them, we say.


△ There's a grate in this room that leads to a locked office. We call that a 'tip'.


△ Crouch down and you can search bodies for useful equipment.

because you've not pressed R hard enough). Being petulantly forced to find the one way of succeeding is far less enjoyable than, say, *Hitman 2's* gloriously free-form approach to completing missions.

FLY IN THE SKY

Having said all of this, the game nonetheless is far from being a poor experience. It may look functional rather than exceptional, but it does, on occasion, produce tangible atmosphere. Sneaking around a British museum after closing is undeniably fun, and when the stealth elements do work, there's certainly a frisson of tension and excitement to proceedings. The gadgets, despite their recycled nature (the Fly Cam is a *Perfect Dark*-copying prime example), can be great fun, and trying to get a lock on a guard's ocular orb for a retinal scan is just one example. Nikki's versatility is, if expected, pleasing – there's almost always some way to climb or crawl – and even if, unforgivably, she can't attack an enemy unarmed (unless she's sneaked up behind someone), her arsenal of weapons isn't a letdown. Just remember to search enemy bodies thoroughly as there's very little ammo left lying around.

Sadly, however, there are too many problems here, and they prevent *Rogue Ops* being as much fun as it should be. It seesaws annoyingly between enjoyable and frustrating, and as a result is a wildly uneven experience. The basic premise is sound, it's just the execution that lets it all down.

Ultimately, with superior stealth titles like *Hitman 2* and *Splinter Cell* already on the shelves we can't in all honesty recommend that you buy *Rogue Ops* instead. Unless, of course, you'd rather play as an attractive revenge-driven lady than a genetically-engineered besuited baldy. The choice, as they say, is yours. But in the end, it's an obvious one to make.

JES BICKHAM

> **"WHEN THE STEALTH ELEMENTS WORK, THERE'S A FRISSON OF TENSION AND EXCITEMENT"**

LET THERE BE LIGHT

Occasionally you'll need to distract guards or civilian office workers in order to get to a certain area or to lure them away from an objective or an easily-panicked NPC. Usually this boils down to turning the lights on, which is sufficiently intriguing – and no doubt within the realms of the fantastic – to warrant an investigation.


■ A variety of Bondesque gadgets.
■ Competent espionage thrills.


■ *Hitman 2* already exists.
■ Clumsy and frustrating.



Hitman 2
Eidos
NGC/82 91%
Superior in almost every respect, and you're able to do missions as you see fit.




6 VISUALS
Totally average. We've seen better, we've seen worse.

6 SOUNDS
Cinematic music but variable voice acting. When it's bad, it's *bad*.


6 MASTERY
Does what it does competently and no more.

7 LIFESPAN
There's lots here but you'll only see the end if you're patient.

VERDICT

The latest in a long line of espionage games proves to be one of the weakest. *Rogue Ops* is never bad, but it's only fun in fits and starts.



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DID YOU KNOW? *Rogue Ops* contains some swearing. But not as much as *Die Hard Vendetta* – that's got the F-word. Somebody at Bits Studios really likes profanity.



Δ Boost while going over jumps and you might land on a different part of the track. These bits have items that open up shortcuts and other routes later on.



Δ Stunts are done by holding the joystick to make the car spin around.



Δ Collect the yellow coins to earn an extra nitro boost or two.



Δ The speedo says 237mph but it never feels particularly quick.



Δ Wow! Can things get any more exciting than this? Let's hope so.



Δ Use the brakes to activate a particularly feeble powerslide. It barely works, and is more likely to make the car stop dead than get it sliding properly.



- Nice and smooth in single-player mode.
- 60Hz option.
- Doesn't crash.



- Boring.
- Boring.
- Boring.
- Boring.

IF YOU LIKE THIS...

F-Zero GX
Nintendo
NGC/85 93%
The only future racer that's really worth playing. Why bother with mediocrity?



4 VISUALS
Smooth in one-player mode, and very colourful. Ugly too.

4 SOUNDS
Entirely predictable music and effects. Nothing interesting.

3 MASTERY
Rubbish handling. Plays like you're driving a brick.

3 LIFESPAN
Annoying computer opponents make for little replay value.

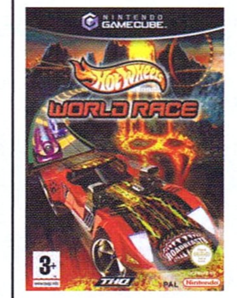
VERDICT
What's the point in this then? There are loads of driving games available and most of them are more fun. There is no reason for this game to exist.





INFO BURST

PUBLISHER	THQ
DEVELOPER	CLIMAX
RELEASE DATE	OUT NOW
PLAYERS	1-4
MEMORY CARD PAGES	14
GBA LINK-UP	NO
SURROUND SOUND	NO
WIDESCREEN	NO
COST	£40



HOT WHEELS
HIGHWAY 35 WORLD RACE

3… 2… 1… Yawn… It's the racing game that defines the word 'mediocre'. Stay awake now.

There's no cure for blandness in a game. The designers can dress it up in all the neon lights they can find, but if the concept is as painfully dull as this one then there's no saving it.

Hot Wheels is the Vauxhall Vectra to *F-Zero GX*'s Ferrari 360. It's slow, unwieldy, totally uncool and very little fun. Quite why anyone would want to play this when there's such a hugely superior alternative available is a mystery. Presumably nobody does, and *Hot Wheels* will sell about five copies.

Which is at least five more than it deserves. The thing handles like you're driving through molasses – the slow, syrupy steering is barely responsive enough to get your vehicle from one side of the road to the other, let alone powerslide around a corner.

You're supposed to pull stunts to build up your turbo meter. Spin the car a few times after a jump and you get a barely noticeable burst of speed as a reward. Mess it up and you're likely to find your car gets reset facing the wrong way.

Meanwhile the computer racers carry on in a tedious procession. You can make up the distance in no time at all thanks to some ridiculously generous catch-up logic that also means you'll drop from first to last almost every time you make a mistake.

As the icing on the cake, it's an uncommonly ugly game, filled with gaudy colours and featureless tunnels. There's nothing of interest to look at while you're enjoying another stomach-achingly dull race.

Why bother? Whose bright idea was it to approve this rubbish? Utter pants.

MARTIN KITTS





Δ Even *Tube Slider* is more interesting.

SMALL IS BEAUTIFUL

Okay, your home console probably has far better graphics than your GBA, but you can't take your Cube on the bus, can you? And Jordan's all very well, but you'd rather take Kylie home to meet your mum, right? All in all, we're all about the small.

NGC THIS IS HANDHELD HEAVEN

GBA REVIEWS



△ With special timed stabs at the attack button, you can pull off a two- or three-hit combo that's a touch faster than if you were just to hammer away like a gibbon. This is about as 'deep' as the combat gets. Keep wading through the endless supply of enemies and you'll start to level up.



△ As usual, the townsfolk give you quests.



△ This screen shows enemy stats and so on.



SWORD OF MANA

The long awaited sequel to the SNES classic. Can the old formula still cut it?



We doubt that anyone who played through *Secret of Mana* on the SNES was left unaffected by it. It was gorgeous to look at, deeply absorbing and, for many gamers (including ourselves) it surpassed Nintendo's own *Zelda: A Link to the Past* for sheer scale and quality. Understandably, then, everyone's been expecting developers Brownie Brown to deliver a similarly brilliant game in *Sword of Mana* – the latest installment of the *Mana* storyline. So it's with great sadness that we have to tell you we're a little disappointed in it.

It's not that *Sword of Mana* is particularly bad, mind you – far from it. It's a solid, colourful and well-produced RPG adventure and it's certainly entertaining from start to finish. The basic game mechanic for example, much like in *Secret of Mana*, is a pleasant one. Rather than being forced into countless random battles, the fighting is in real-time. It's very similar to *A Link to the Past* except that your character has the ability to level up. Kill off enough creatures and you can manually assign points to your

> **"IT'S VERY SIMILAR TO A LINK TO THE PAST, EXCEPT THAT YOUR CHARACTER IS ABLE TO LEVEL UP"**


Δ Many of the game's locations show off some lovely artwork – but, on the downside, many of the environments seem very samey and repetitive after a while.



Δ You can take control of assisting characters by hitting the Select button.



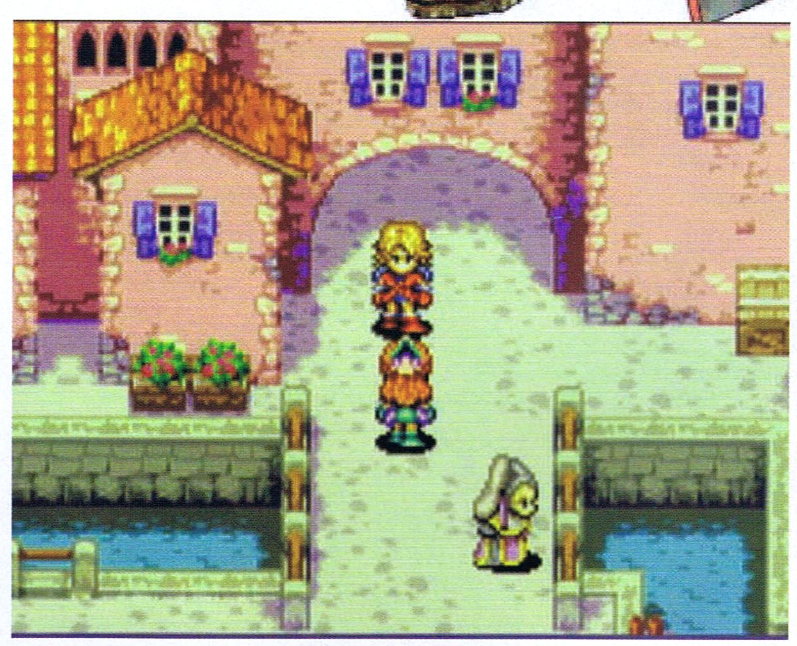
Δ The story is acceptable enough, but there's little in the way of surprises. Disappointing.

Δ The bosses require no strategy to dispatch.



Δ The passage of day and night is very poorly implemented and makes little difference.


Δ The ability to choose the way your character develops is one of the game's better points.

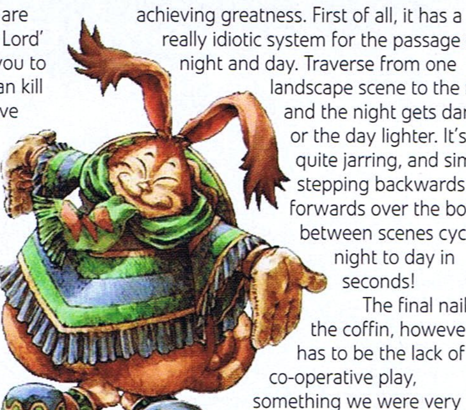

Δ If you're the kind of person who couldn't get into *Golden Sun* or find RPG's generally off-putting thanks to random battles, then this may well be worth a shot…

hero/heroinne to determine his or her (you can choose at the start) strength.

The game's structure is also very familiar, with the adventure consisting of journeying over land to reach towns, talking to the folk you find there to further the plot or to pick up side quests and then, inevitably, being required to work your way through dungeons and caves and so forth in order to battle more monsters and bosses.

Zero marks for originality, then. It's something that's confounded even further by the hackneyed plot. Take the male character's story, for example. Your parents are murdered by a man called 'Dark Lord' (give us strength) and it's up to you to retrieve a magic sword so you can kill him. You're torn up over (and have nightmares about) your failure to protect a young girl, who *miraculously* happens to be the first person you bump into when your adventure starts. It's not that stuff like this ruins the game, but we *know* the developers are capable of more than this, so why do we have to settle for it?

There are, however, a number of practical factors that *do* stop the game from achieving greatness. First of all, it has a really idiotic system for the passage of night and day. Traverse from one landscape scene to the next and the night gets darker or the day lighter. It's quite jarring, and simply stepping backwards and forwards over the border between scenes cycles night to day in seconds!



The final nail in the coffin, however, has to be the lack of co-operative play, something we were very much looking forward to and something that makes the horrible *horrible* AI of your supporting character that much harder to bear.

So, fans of *Secret* will be sorely disappointed with this – but as we said, for all its failings, the 20 or so hours it takes to finish it are still enjoyable. It's just that the quality isn't as high as we expected.

GERAINT EVANS

INFO BURST

FROM	NINTENDO
PLAYERS	1
SINGLE-CART	
LINK UP	YES
SAVE	ON CART
OUT	IMPORT
COST	£30

NGC INDEPENDENT NINTENDO GAMING **78**

TOP 10 GBA GAMES

Just picked up a GBA for Christmas? Our recommendations for the perfect palm-sized pleasures are as follows…



ADVANCE WARS 1+2

Widely regarded by everyone around here as the best GBA games available. Both are superb turn-based strategy games that involve pitting numerous unit types against an enemy force in a beautifully presented battle of wits.In our opinion it doesn't really matter which of these you pick up (the first one is obviously a bit cheaper) and both are equally addictive. Essential.



METROID FUSION

All the *Metroid* ingredients are here. There's an ever-increasing world to explore as you access the tons of upgrades and power-ups available. The visuals are both clear, detailed and atmospheric, while the challenge is just about high enough to please fans of the series. The game also has GC link-up features, allowing you unlock the original NES game.



SUPER MARIO ADVANCE 2

Yeah, okay, so this is just a slightly tweaked version of the SNES' *Super Mario World*, but even by today's standards you won't find a better, more tightly designed 2D platformer. So good was it in its day, that it cemented Shigsy's position as the world's finest designer.

Boasting 96 levels of perfectly pitched side-scrolling action, the game oozes quality and imagination and is an utter joy to play from start to finish.



WARIO WARE

A collection of 200 different minigames that appear on the screen in three-second bursts. It means you have to figure out what you're doing in a split second before moving on to the next. One of the most original and addictive games of recent times, it's perfect handheld fodder, allowing you to play for only a matter of minutes…



MARIO KART SUPER CIRCUIT

Like a mix-up of all the very best elements from both the N64 version and the SNES original, it once again pits you against seven other racers in a selection of mad-cap Grand Prix, where speed and cunning use of hilarious weapons is the order of the day.

The game also features a four-player link-up allowing you to race your mates and, in a rather generous touch, giving you the chance to unlock the original SNES tracks.



POKÉMON RUBY SAPPHIRE

Love them or hate them you can't argue that the games are high in quality. There are over 300 critters for you to catch and train over the two versions of the game, while entering battles with your 'mon and exploring towns takes up the remainder of the play time. Both games link up together allowing you to battle and trade. They'll also link up to the forthcoming Gamecube *Pokémon Colosseum*.



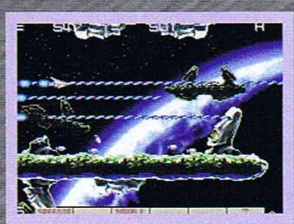
STREET FIGHTER ALPHA 3

Developed by the now-disbanded Crawfish studios, *SFA3* is a technical marvel. Just how they crammed this perfect port of the arcade fighting behemoth into a GBA cart we'll never know, but this is slick, addictive, eminently controllable and, in some areas (like its extras), superior to the PlayStation version. Quite simply, there is no better fighter for the handheld. Definitely one of **NGC**'s faves.



MARIO & LUIGI SUPERSTAR SAGA

We reviewed this little marvel last issue, and it immediately became one of our games of the year. It's essentially a Nintendo RPG staring the two fraternal plumbers, but it's also a cunning little puzzle title with some smart platforming elements worked in. The best bit of all, though, is that *Superstar Saga* is incredibly funny, with an absolutely fantastic script full of Nintendo parodies and in-jokes, usually made at poor old Luigi's expense.



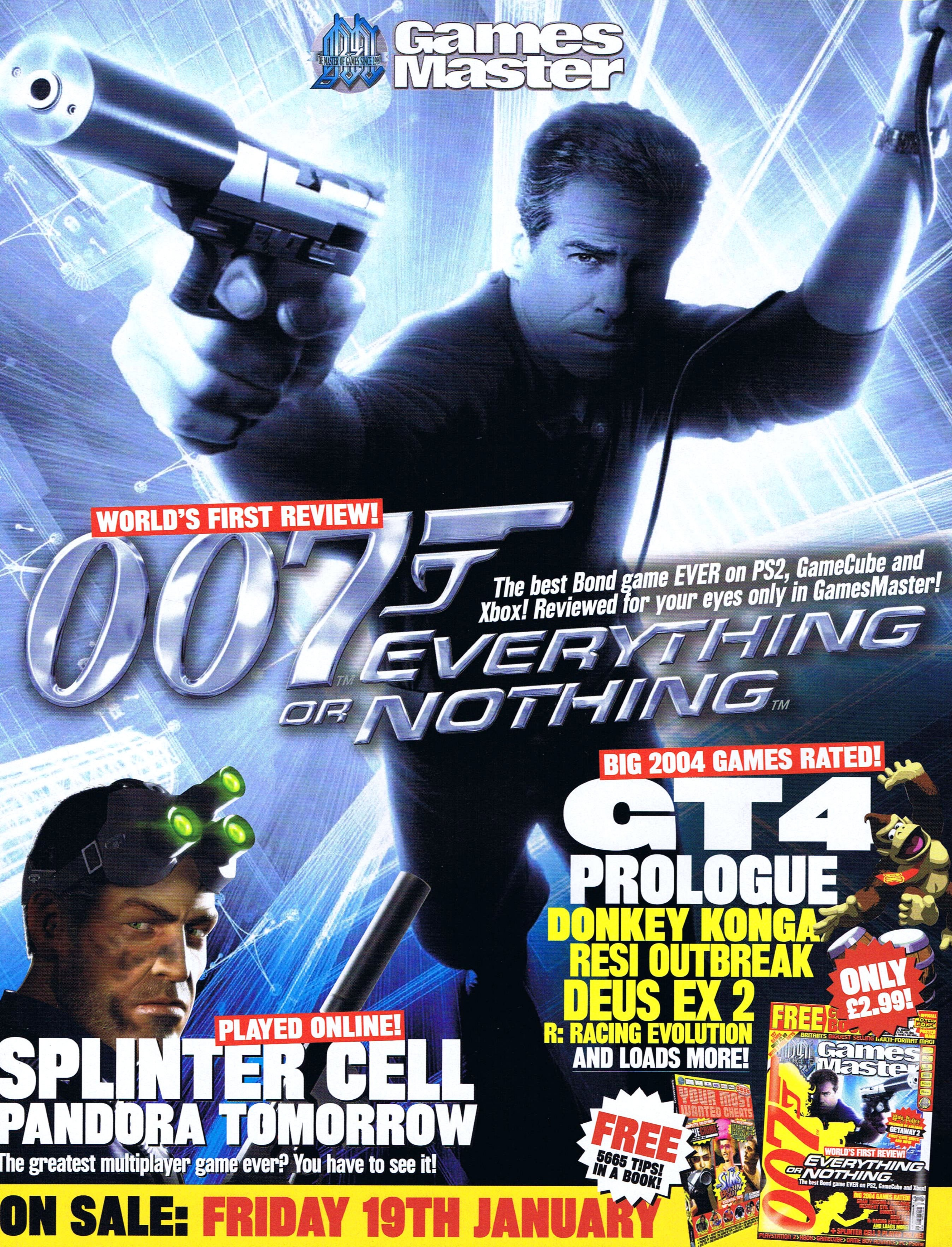
GRADIUS ADVANCE

Surprisingly, there's a bit of a drought on the GBA as far as decent shoot-'em-ups are concerned and so this is undoubtedly your best bet. It's a stonkingly good blaster and, due to a lack of on-screen clutter, the all-important visual clarity is perfect. It's not exactly the most challenging *Gradius* game we've seen but then, for a handheld game it doesn't really matter, does it?



TOP GEAR RALLY

One of the most technically impressive GBA game of recent times, with rolling hills and decent scenery whipping by at a fair old pace. It's a surprisingly solid 3D racer in the same vein as *Sega Rally*. The handling of the cars is superb, offering straight-up arcade thrills. The game is also subtle enough to be satisfying on the harder settings.



GamesMaster
WORLD'S FIRST REVIEW!
007 EVERYTHING OR NOTHING
The best Bond game EVER on PS2, GameCube and Xbox! Reviewed for your eyes only in GamesMaster!
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GT4 PROLOGUE
DONKEY KONGA
RESI OUTBREAK
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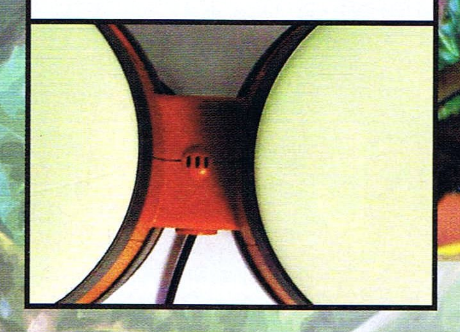


△ Leave the title screen idle for a while and you'll be treated to a short story. Unfortunately, we haven't the faintest idea exactly *why* you're bongoing…

BONGO PADS
You can feel big, flat buttons underneath the rubbery-feel pads. Smacking the bongo gives a diffused slapping sound. They're not loud on their own, the sound is taken care of by the GC.

START BUTTON
On the panel between the bongos. You use this to make your menu and game setting selections. We thought it would've been nice for this to have been replaced by the clap sensor – then we realised how unfunny it would be to have your memory card data 'altered' by some wazzok clapping behind you.

CLAP SENSOR
This sits between the two bongos and will, unsurprisingly, sense when you clap. In fact, it will sense when you do anything really. Click your fingers, flick the sides of the bongo controller or do anything else that makes a short, sharp noise. If you want to wind up anyone who's playing, click your fingers out of time to mess their game up.



EXTRA PLAYERS
In our opinion, if you have extra bongos, you can up the mark at the end of this review to 90%. When you have four players the game really comes into its own, both in terms of the competitive nature of the game and the social aspect of having mates around for an evening of bongo action.

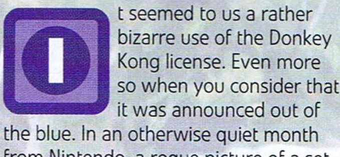
DONKEY KONGA

INFO BURST

DEVELOPER	NAMCO
RELEASE DATE	OUT NOW (JAP)
PUBLISHER	NINTENDO
PLAYERS	1-4
MEMORY CARD PAGES	3
GBA LINK-UP	NO
SURROUND SOUND	YES
WIDESCREEN	NO
COST	¥6,800



Should beating off to a dancing gorilla with your friends really be *this* much fun? Oh yes, friends… oh *yesss*…



It seemed to us a rather bizarre use of the Donkey Kong license. Even more so when you consider that it was announced out of the blue. In an otherwise quiet month from Nintendo, a rogue picture of a set of bongos was suddenly doing the rounds. No screenshots, no details, nothing. Just bongos. Just enough then, to arouse our interest.

And how *couldn't* you be interested? The last time we had the chance to revel in any monkey-driven rhythm action was when we played *Samba de Amigo* on the Dreamcast. A heady, sherry-fuelled night of *Samba* madness round Kittsy's house where, for four straight hours, we abused his £300-worth of plastic maracas until our arms were knackered and our the palms of our hands were red raw. Could it be that, courtesy of yet another Namco and Nintendo collaboration, we were in for yet another monkey-based party classic? Only playing would tell…

> **"THE LAST CHANCE WE HAD TO REVEL IN ANY MONKEY-DRIVEN RHYTHM ACTION WAS SAMBA DE AMIGO ON THE DREAMCAST"**

"A wonderful cacophony of beats"





△ Learning the tracks is one thing, but mastering your timing for huge scores is a different matter…



HAPPY CLAPPER

The sensor in the bongos works brilliantly. In fact, it works just a little too well. If you're playing with four people and sitting close to each other, it has the habit of picking up other people's claps. The sensitivity can be turned down in Options.

TAKE *THAT* AND PARTY

A brief run down to the game's play modes…

SOLO MODE

This is where most of the action takes place at first. Unfortunately you can only collect the coins in single-player mode, so you'll have to spend time working through each of the songs to amass enough currency to unlock the Extra Hard versions of all the tracks as well as the minigames and extra sounds. There is a free Session mode there, too – it allows you to practice songs but you don't earn cash for them.



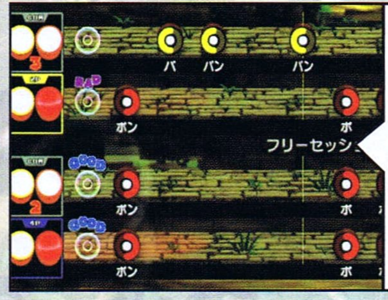
TWO-PLAYER BATTLE

You versus a mate. You get to play through one song (each player's song-bars are slightly different) and the highest score at the end wins. There are special 'POW' blocks that scroll along – the first person to hit this gets a fruit machine above their song bar, and stopping it when the 'STOP' icon scrolls down the song bar allows you to earn score bonuses. Unfortunately, you can't play this as a four-player game.

TWO-PLAYER CHALLENGE

You're given a series of random songs one after the other. Missing commands that scroll down the song bar will cause you to lose a little health (signified by the bar in the top right) each time. Run out of health and it's game over. After each song, you'll be awarded bonus health depending on your performance. This is actually a very good game, if a little long, and is best suited to two like-skilled players.





FREE SESSION

This can be played by one to four players. It really comes into its own with three or four players, however, and, ultimately proves the most enjoyable aspect of the whole game. Each player has their own rhythm for each track and, when combined with everyone else's rhythm, creates a wonderful cacophony of beats. You can't 'fail' a song but the best player of each track is awarded with a trophy.



△ Two-player action is more competitive than the four-player thanks to Battle mode.

BONGO BONUSES

Thrown into the musical mixer is a selection of various modes for you to try out. Pleasingly, there are also a few minigames that exploit the peripheral…

WAKKA MOLE



Er… or in this case, Wakka K Rool. Out of these three little mud holes pops K Rool or Diddy Kong. It's up to you to smack the croc by hitting the right bongo.

Left bongo for the left hole, right for right and clap for the middle hole. Get the right hole before K Rool dissapears and a ruddy great big metal block will hit him.

Look out for Diddy Kong, though – hit him when he pops out and your score will be penalised. Surely there's something inherently *wrong* with that logic?

You've got a minute before it's game over. It seems there's no kind of Time Extension, which is a shame as there's not much scope for topping high scores.

100-METRE CLIMB



One of the minigames you can play with two players, this. By hammering away at the bongos, Donkey Kong will climb up the vines to the top.

On the way there are various fruits to be collected. By tapping left and right on the bongos, you can swap vines to collect the bonuses, adding to your final score.

However, there are cross-vines blocking your way, as well as nasties to knock you down the vines. Again, use the bongos to make your way to safer vines.

Unfortunately, it's not really much of a race – because the screen scrolls up steadily, you can never push on as quickly as you'd like. Which is just silly.

BANANA JUGGLER



This is probably the only only minigame that has some serious scope for high-score beating. Here, Diddy passes Donkey bananas for him to juggle.

Clapping passes a banana, while the left bongo hands it over to the right hand. Finally, your right bongo chucks it in the air for it to fall back to the left.

The trick is to get a steady stream of bananas passed from left to right and up into the air. The more bananas you can get Diddy to hand over, the higher…

…your scoring potential. However, the more bananas you have the harder it is to juggle them. Dropped bananas inflict a score penalty at the end.

KEEP YOUR COOL



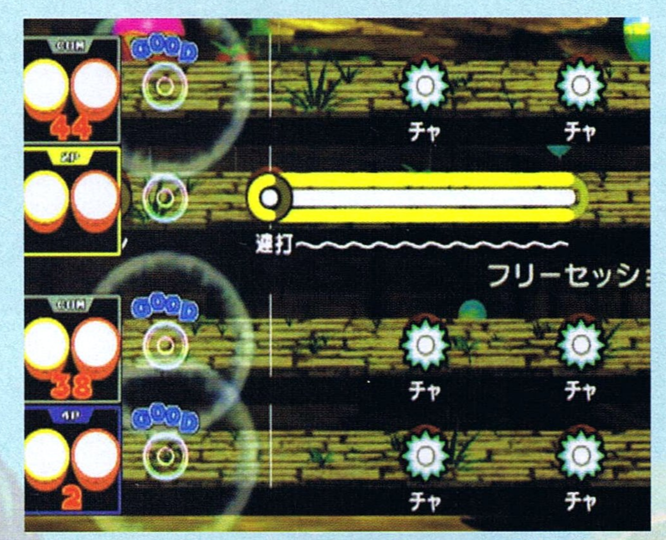
Okay, so this isn't really a mode as such. Once you've managed to score gold on all the different difficulties, Namco have got a different little mode in store for you…

…In Cool mode, you have to bongo blind. The actual strikes or claps to all the various songs are picked out for you by plain barrels so you can't see what …

…actions you're supposed to be taking for each beat. The thing is, it's a pretty tedious mode on Easy, but memorising the often insanely complex patterns…

…in Extra Hard mode will be nigh-on impossible. And that's supposing anyone in the world could actually be bothered to go through the pain of doing so. Dull.

"Seriously amusing"

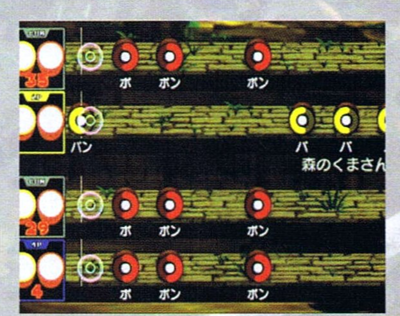


△ Four-player mode is where it's at. You really get a sense of rhythm here.



△ Once you've raked in enough coins in single-player you can buy some truly, *truly* irritating noises.

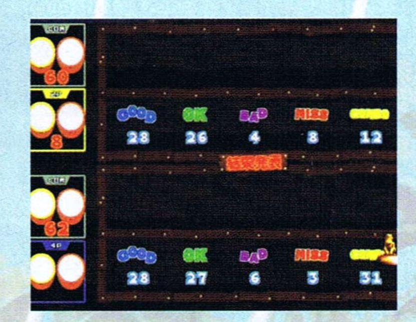




△ Each of the four players gets to bang out their own parts of the track. Brilliant stuff.



△ You don't actually get graded on these elongated commands, but they're a brilliant source of coins as well as essential for racking up big scores and competing in the two-player modes.





△ Don't worry if you can't speak Japanese – each song plays while you cycle through.



The rules of the game are relatively simple. Just like in any rhythm action title, you have to input commands to the beat of a variety of different songs. In the case of *Donkey Konga* any tune that you attempt puts you face-to-face with a procession of different icons. Yellow circles require you to hit the left bongo. Red icons require you to hit the right bongo. Spiky blue circles represent the need to clap, while the pink circles tell you that you need to strike both bongos together. Elongated symbols tell you to batter the corresponding bongo as fast as you can. Timing these hits is crucial. Smack your bongos in perfect rhythm and you'll be awarded with a 'Good' rating per hit. Striking the required bongo just a little bit off and you'll get an 'Okay' rating, poor timing awards you with 'Bad', while missing the beat entirely causes a 'Miss' to register.

The aim for each song, then, is to manage to get 'Good' or 'Okay' ratings. If you do this repeatedly, then you'll rack up a combo – an unbroken sequence of hits that register neither 'Bad' nor 'Miss'. Manage this and a performance meter at the top right-hand side of the screen will fill up, first through red and then into yellow. Finish the song in the yellow and you'll pass the selected tune with a silver award. Fill up the gauge completely and you'll be awarded gold – something you can only achieve by missing hardly any bongo strikes at all.

At the end of each song you not only get to see your overall performance and final score, but you'll also be awarded with a number of gold coins. While you're playing through a particular track, each successful hit will knock coins from the input icon and drop them into a machine below. If you successfully complete the song (by finishing in the yellow zone on the performance meter) then you'll get to keep your haul of coins. You can then spend these in the game's shop, allowing you to unlock more difficult songs in the Extra Hard mode and buy minigames as well as purchase different bongo sounds to use on any track.



ANIMANIACS

The Galaxy Express 999 and the opening to the Doraemon anime – one of the only anime tunes we recognise (along with Advance Adventure – the current opening theme to Pokémon in Japan). DK also features the opening theme to the Kirby anime and the Totoko Hamtaro Song, which, unsurprisingly is the opening theme to the Hamtaro anime. Also, you'll find a remix of the Pikmin tune that hit No 1 in Japan as well as the obscure Starfy advert tune.

SLAVE TO THE RHYTHM

It's difficult to imagine being let loose with a set of plastic bongos failing to be anything but seriously amusing. The whole concept of the game in itself is enough to ensure that anyone, no matter what their age or gaming taste, will have a great deal of fun.

As with any bemani game, if you're unfamiliar with the style of play then things can be a little tricky at first, coupled with the fact that the shyer gamer will feel like a right spooner sitting down banging and clapping their way through a bunch of songs.

Slowly but surely, though, you'll become entranced with the whole experience. You'll become fixated on those icons scrolling from right to left. You'll begin to learn how the various rhythmic patterns work, and before you



△ Battering the bongos sends a shower of flowers from left to right.



△ Diddy cowers at the might of Donkey.

△ Free Session sees the most action in terms extra on-screen furniture. Here you see Rambi, K Rool and Cranky getting down to those jungle rhythms. Yeah, great.

BLORK!

Collect the coins in the single-player mode and you can unlock new sounds from the game's shop. These range from standard instrumental sounds to the totally bizarre (like dogs barking and whimpering) to classic NES Mario FX.



know it you'll be slapping and clapping your way through the tunes like some sugar-fuelled three-year-old in the grip of 'If You're Happy and you Know it…'

At this stage in the proceedings, you'll think *Donkey Konga* is the best thing you've ever played in your life. You'll relish seeking out the tougher songs, and feel properly pleased with yourself when you master particularly frantic bars of rhythm action in the more demanding songs. Moreover, after a couple of hours, you'll physically ache. The palms of your hands will feel bruised from your overenthusiastic actions, but the prospect of securing a hoard of 600 coins for unlockable extras will spur you on into the early hours of the morning. No mean feat when you consider just how odd some of the music you're playing along to is on this Japanese import.

> SECURING 600 COINS FOR UNLOCKABLE EXTRAS WILL SPUR YOU ON INTO THE EARLY HOURS OF THE MORNING

Don't get us wrong, you'll recognize some of the tunes. La Bamba and Mambo No 5 instantly spring to mind, along with a couple of classical tunes, a Mario theme and, of course, the tune everyone loves to hate – the DK Rap. As for the rest, well, you're in for a *real* treat. Imagine a cross between Japanese nursery rhymes remixed with some of the worst Eurovision efforts you can think of, and then you're somewhere near the kind of music to expect. Not exactly to our tastes, we have to admit… or so we thought…

You see, for some strange reason, even the most ear-wrenching cacophony of happy Japanese vocals (combined with a jaunty Euro-pop backing track, naturally) makes for highly entertaining and strangely amusing accompaniment to your drumming. Maybe it's the lure of the unfamiliar, we couldn't say, but *damn* if we didn't find ourselves humming them on the train to work. The music slides from irritating to infectious, and after a while, any differences in cultural taste seem completely irrelevant. Okay, so inevitably there are a few tracks in there a that aren't particulary good or entertaining to drum along to, but on the whole, the sheer range of stuff on offer is admirable.



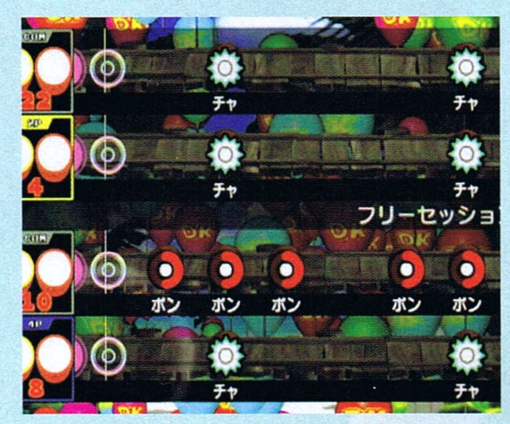
SECRETS?

We were hoping that Namco would have hidden away some secrets in the game, like extra songs and minigames, but as yet we haven't found any. One thing that has aroused our curiosity, however, is the appearance of Blue coins that pop out of the Song bar on rare occasions. We know that they're worth 100 coins but apart from that we have no idea as to their significance. If any importers have figured it out, please let us know…

NO FANCY DRESS…

Donkey Konga then, is quite simply, *excellent* fun. However, there are a number of issues that we have with the game. Issues that prevent the game from becoming a true classic like the DC's *Samba De Amigo*. You see, it's not that *Donkey*

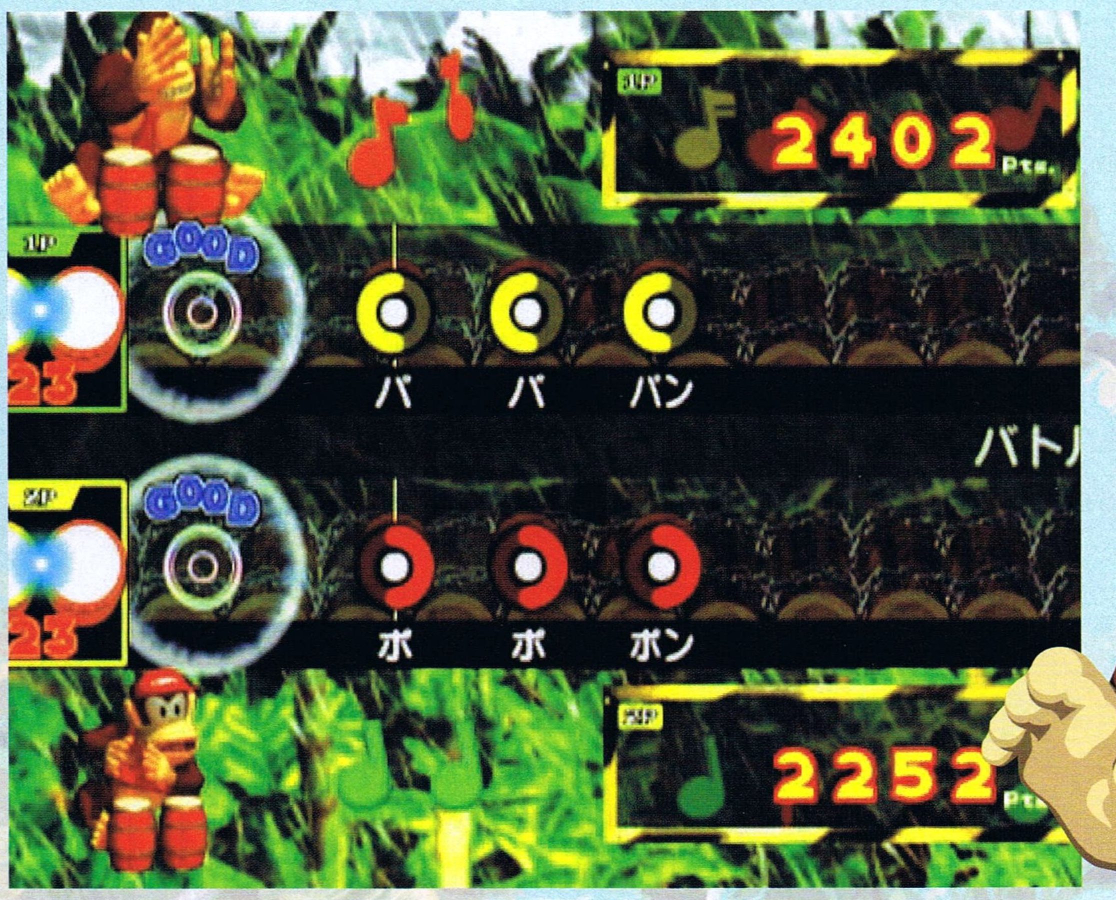
"It doesn't do many things as well as it should"



△ Racking up unbroken chains of successful hits, or 'comboing', helps you get a whopping score at the end.



△ By scoring three 'Goods' when the stop commands pass, you'll get a score a bonus over your rival.



△ The backgrounds could really have done with more work. Although there's a decent variety (chosen at random for each song) this one's about as exciting as they get – it has pouring rain over the rather drab artwork. Thanks Namco. Thanks for the effort.



TOP TIP

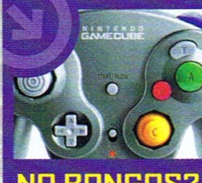
Here's a tip. The amount of coins you get isn't really determined by the difficulty of the tracks, but rather by the amount of commands you have to input. Find a relatively simple tune with loads of commands to input and you'll rake in the extra cash!

Konga does anything wrong, more that it doesn't do many things as well as it should. First of all Namco have hardly put in too much effort into the presentation side of things. Everything's pretty rudimentary, with page after page of scrolling brown menus that lead in to the various game modes and options. Even when you get into the action itself, it's all pretty much uninspired. Okay, so the nature of the game itself hardly allows you to pay much attention the quality of backgrounds, but that's hardly an excuse for the fact that they're almost totally lacking in any charisma.

The little elephant who guards the coin machine at the bottom of the screen, for example, boasts all of three frames of animation, while accompanying him is Diddy Kong and a bunch of yellow chicken-like creatures that just amble about below. Aside from this, the only other window dressing on display is a steadily scrolling background – and even this isn't particularly spectacular.

It's all very disappointing stuff. We completely understand that the four- (and maybe) two-player modes don't exactly allow much room for too much on-screen clutter, but surely for the single-player mode Namco could have made at least *some* effort to imbue a kind of party atmosphere to the proceedings. An odd flurry of balloons and flowers unleashed every time there's a drumroll don't really cut it. We want to see those monkeys *dance*, dammit. We want a full-on Jungle Boogie to explode across the screen to reward our bad-ass bongo rhythms – *something* to get our pulses racing.

Lastly, we're a little miffed at the difficulty curve. Easy mode is laughable. Hard mode is getting there and the Extra Hard mode, although frightening the first time you attempt it, soon



NO BONGOS?

If you can't face forking out even more money for extra bongos, then you'll be pleased to hear that you can use the joypad to play along. Okay, so it's hardly as much fun – and it does defeat the whole object of the game – but still…

The analogue or D-pad takes control of the left bongo, the C stick is for the right bongo, while the Z button simulates a handclap. Using the pad actually makes some minigames a bit easier too.



△ Fill the yellow bar for a Gold.

△ Hit those power boxes for a chance at the fruit machine during the song. Scoring well on these can mean the difference between victory and defeat.

△ Some drum patterns look quite scary at first, but it really doesn't take long to get used to slapping your bongo at speed.

buckles under the sheer weight of your bongoing prowess. Even if you've never touched a rhythm game before, it wouldn't take too long to get 'your eye in' and score Golds on the vast majority of tunes accross all three difficulties.

This can't be said about the toughest mode in the game, though. In 'Cool' mode, you have to drum without the assistance of the coloured icon scroll. Instead you have a procession of brown barrels to pick out the beat, but nothing more. No indication of which bongo to hit, or whether or not you need to clap. Now call us cynical, but memorising the drum patterns is more like a chore than any fun. Considering that many of the tunes have 250+ bongo and clap inputs, it seems like a very easy and rather cheap way of attempting to extend the game's lifespan. Surely some kind of freestyle arena where you could compose your own rhythms (and maybe even save them to memory and trade with friends) would have been a more worthwhile addition? *DDR* games, for quite some time now, have had modes where you could edit dance steps and so forth, and we doubt it would have been too difficult to add something like this to *Donkey Konga*.

Still, like we said, the fact that we wanted so much more only highlights the quality of what's already on offer.

DONKEY KONGA'S EXCELLENT FUN AND THE KIND OF GAME YOU CAN RELY ON TO BRING A SMILE TO EVERYONE'S FACE

Donkey Konga is certainly original (at least as far as Gamecube is concerned, and, even with a solitary set of bongos, it's excellent, *excellent* fun and the kind of game you can rely on to bring a smile to everyone's face. It's accessible to anyone with its simple rules and presentation, yet absorbing enough to make multi-bongoed multiplayer bouts extremely competitive.

So the question is, should you import it? Well, aside from the memory card issue (see the 'Import-ant!' box on the left there…) we would say a resounding "yes". Nintendo still haven't announced a release date for the UK and, to be honest, we doubt we'll see it for a little while yet as the music will no doubt need to be localised and, subsequently, licensed. Granted, the music currently provided in the Japanese version of the game won't be to everyone's tastes, but we guarantee that after a few hours with the game, musical quality will really be the last thing on your mind.

GERAINT EVANS

IMPORT-ANT!

While Donkey Konga does work with a Freeloader, there is a problem with saving (even if you have a Japanese-formatted memory card). A problem in so far that, as far as we've experienced, you won't be able to save your game at all. With this being the case, we strongly advise against importing if you have a PAL Gamecube. If you have a Japanese, or modified Gamecube however, then you'll be able to feel the Konga love just fine…



- Pure, simple fun.
- Superb in multiplayer.
- Cheesy tunes.



- Not as imaginative as we'd hoped.
- Need more bongos for the most fun.



IF YOU LIKE THIS…

Made in Wario
Nintendo
NGC/89 90%
There're no other Bemani on GC, but as party games go, this is the best.



4 VISUALS
It doesn't look great. In fact, it doesn't even try.

8 SOUNDS
A mixture of samba, J-pop, classical and children's tunes.

4 MASTERY
Could, and should, have been so much more than this.



9 LIFESPAN
A fairly simple game, but it'll last with multiple bongos.

VERDICT
Frighteningly entertaining and remarkable in multiplayer – a superb addition to the GC's catalogue of party games.

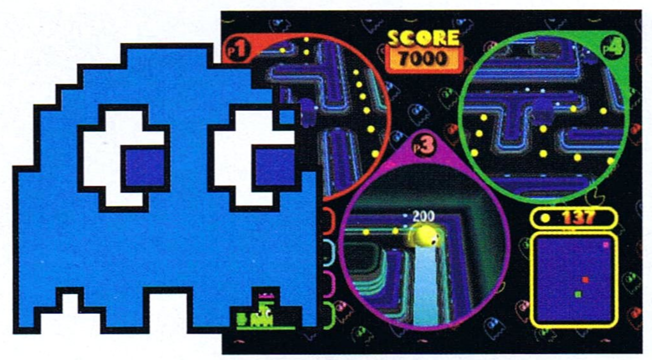


NGC INDEPENDENT NINTENDO GAMING



88

"Who did Shigsy sell his mop-topped soul to?"



△ Each of the ghosts only gets to see a little bit of the map. They'll need to work together, yes indeed.



△ Unfortunately the game isn't particularly interesting to look at. This is because it's OLD.



△ Once again, if Pac-Man munches on a power pill he can eat the ghosts. Doesn't last for long though.



△ The ghosts can see where they are in relation to each other on the radar screen in the bottom right corner – vital information, that is. Best use it well.



△ When will Nintendo release this over here? We don't know yet and neither, it would seem, do they. Still, we're hopeful that it'll appear before too long.

INFO BURST

PUBLISHER	NAMCO
DEVELOPER	NINTENDO
RELEASE DATE	NOW (JAP/US)
PLAYERS	1-4
MEMORY CARD PAGES	0
GBA LINK-UP	YES
SURROUND SOUND	NO
WIDESCREEN	NO
COST	SEE 'HOW DO I GET IT?'

PAC-MAN VS

Nintendo unearth something ancient. But is it treasure or just an old dinosaur?

On this, space-year 2004, do we really need a throwback like Pac-Man? He belongs in a museum, under glass, pinned down like a long-dead butterfly. He's a slice of history, a fossil, a crude yellow blob so fashioned because computers ran on rubber bands when he was created and pixel-clay was a raw, unrefined thing. He's a throwback. A videogame neanderthal.

In short, even though 2001: A Space Odyssey lied to us about Leonard Rossiter in space, we live in the future anyway and it is a time of marvels. Especially videogame marvels. Pac-Man is a thing out of time. Are you listening, little yellow bloke? *We don't want you.*

Except. Except *we do*. Nintendo have made him relevant – and, more importantly, they've made him *fun*. How? How did they manage that? Have you played the original *Pac-Man* lately? It's rubbish. Nintendo haven't changed a thing. It's the same game. What magic flows through their collective fingers? Who did Shigsy sell his mop-topped soul to? *What the hell is going on?*

PAC UP YOUR TROUBLES

It could be something as simple as the fact that games are better when more people are involved. Nintendo might not be geniuses at all. It could just be common sense. It's just that nobody else has done it. But it seems like *magic*. How we mocked when, aside from a too-slow *Mario Kart* and the rubbish on-foot bits from *Rebel Strike*, the biggest thing Nintendo had to show at E3 2003



HOW DO I GET IT?

Currently, there are only two ways of getting hold of Pac-Man Vs, and they both involve importing. The game is being given away free – yes free – in America and Japan with copies of Pac-Man World 2 and R: Racing Evolution. Not bad, eh? Well, except for the fact that you have to buy a game that you might not want. And an NTSC one at that. Sadly, there's no news of a PAL release as yet.



Pac-Man Vs is more fun than sliding around a peanut oil factory in your underpants, chasing Paris Hilton with a camcorder. Fact!



Pac-Man Vs is a great freebie, but like most freebies, it's ultimately a bit inconsequential. Amazingly stupendous fun, maybe, but limited.

PILLS & KILLS

How to play Pac-Man. Ready?



Player one is Pac-Man. He has the GBA, and displayed on it is the whole map, so he can see all the Ghosts and avoid them.



Players two to four are Ghosts. They cannot see the entire map and need to co-ordinate their movements.



When a Ghost catches Pac-Man the Ghost player gets the GBA and becomes Pac-Man. The game continues like this until…



… one player reaches a pre-arranged point limit – 7,000, 10,000 or 15,000. It's that simple, but addictive and fun.



In a vain bid to add some variety, the game offers a little background detail. Look! Trees!

Naturally, everybody wants to be Pac-Man rather than a ghost. He's so much, er, cooler. Um.



What retro classic will Nintendo resurrect next? *Caterpillar? Atic Atac?* A digital Mouse Trap?

was a multiplayer version of *Pac-Man*. We thought they'd lost it. How wrong we were.

SPOOKILY GOOD

Pac-Man Vs is fantastic fun. It also makes GBA-GC connectivity relevant and brilliant. (That's the other lightning-bolt that the game delivers. *It makes connectivity relevant and brilliant!* Astonishing!). The player who is Pac-Man uses a GBA and can see the entire map. The other three, as Ghosts, each have a portion of the TV screen and are therefore denied the bigger picture. Collectively they have to co-operate and triangulate and hunt the Pac-player down. That's it. When Pac-Man is finally caught he hands the Game Boy over to whoever caught him and they then get a chance to be the hero. It's simply top fun, a throwaway resurrection of a videogame trilobite elevated to greatness due to an incredible understanding of what makes multiplayer games fun.

But the crucial word there is 'throwaway'. Despite being an utter hoot – and we've seen lunchtimes otherwise reserved for *Mario Kart* disappear in a flash because it's so good – there are only six maps and the core gameplay, as simple and uncluttered as it is, can't sustain interest forever. It's designed for four people to play, and it only springs into life with the correct human components. Denied that, *Pac-Man Vs* is an incomplete thing, insubstantial and wraith-like, a ghost (ha!) of a game. And naturally, you'll need someone to fork out for a GBA and a link cable in order to play the thing, and, at the time of writing, you'll need an NTSC Gamecube to play it too. Not to mention the fact that you'll have to buy a game you probably don't want to get hold of it. Hey, *Pac-Man Vs* is *free* – how much more throwaway can it be?

But still. In the right circumstances, and with all the required elements, *Pac-Man Vs* is unbridled enjoyment. And that's what matters. But now, Nintendo, after providing us with this bafflingly exquisite little novelty, why don't you show us what you can *really* do? This yellow relic is no substitute for *Mario* and *Zelda*.

JES BICKHAM

> **"ELEVATED TO GREATNESS DUE TO AN UNDERSTANDING OF WHAT MAKES MULTIPLAYER GAMES FUN"**

GHOST WORLD

So, how does the game work with fewer than four players? Rather cleverly, is the answer. Computer-controlled Ghosts need to be 'activated' by human players – run onto their spookily disembodied eyeballs and they'll become your colour. It's a nice mechanic but it can't beat having four actual people playing the game.



- It's free!
- Anyone can play it.
- It's intense multiplayer fun.



- No UK release yet.
- Needs four players.
- Have to buy a new game to get it.



IF YOU LIKE THIS...

Mario Kart Double Dash!!
Nintendo
NGC/88 93%
Another sparkling multiplayer game.



3 VISUALS
It's *Pac-Man*. Not that it needs fancy graphics, mind.

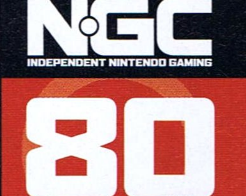
4 SOUNDS
Kill Charles Martinet. Why is he doing a Mario voice for this?

5 MASTERY
Apart from top connectivity, this is pretty basic.

8 LIFESPAN
Got three mates? Got a GBA and link cable? Then you're sorted.

VERDICT

So basic that you'd think it couldn't possibly this much fun. A tremendous multiplayer game, but be warned – that's all it is.



80



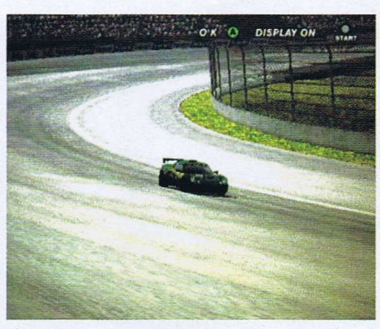
DID YOU KNOW? It took eight people 15 months to make the original *Pac-Man* arcade game. And Pac was inspired by a pizza with a slice missing.

"Definitely some mileage to be had"

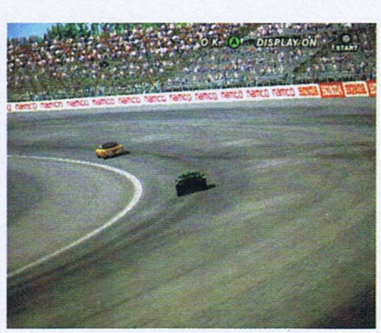

△ The obligatory oval circuit. See if you can break the sound barrier or something.



△ You'll need something meatier than this Lotus to crack the lap record here.



△ Just jam the accelerator and steer right a couple of times. Couldn't be easier.



△ Blow up this image on a 32" widescreen telly and you'll see how pixellated it is.

INFO BURST

PUBLISHER	NAMCO
DEVELOPER	NAMCO
RELEASE DATE	NOW (JAP/US)
PLAYERS	1-2
MEMORY CARD PAGES	2
GBA LINK-UP	NO
SURROUND SOUND	YES
WIDESCREEN	YES
COST	¥6000 (£32)

R: RACING EVOLUTION

Much more than cars and girls. Well, okay, not *that* much more. It's a driving game…



△ The pit radio gives you useful info, such as 'don't drive past a police car while talking on your mobile'.



△ Old man Chang is going to feel the pain when we shunt him off the course. No car damage, you see.

Come on, admit it – when you first heard this game was being developed by the people behind *Ridge Racer*, you were hoping it would really be the latest addition to that classic arcade series and not a hardcore serious driving sim.

Well, we certainly did. After the excellent *Burnout 2* came along and comprehensively out-ridged *Ridge*, we wanted Namco to respond in kind with a highly playable, insanely fast arcade racer to steal back their crown.

> **AFTER BURNOUT 2 CAME ALONG, WE WANTED NAMCO TO RESPOND WITH A HIGHLY PLAYABLE ARCADE RACER**

But this, of course, isn't it. This is the *Ridge Racer* team's attempt to outdo *Gran Turismo*, which is probably an even tougher task to take on than doing a number on *Burnout 2*.

It's suitably big. Although there are only 14 tracks to choose from, there are hundreds of events and challenges to squeeze every bit of value from a wide range of vehicles and a commendably solid handling system.



EVENT OMNIBUS

This is the bulk of the game – a shop filled with hundreds of racing challenges ranging from multi-circuit tournaments to highly technical parking challenges. You buy them with the points won by winning other events. After blasting through the Racing Life mode on Easy we had more than 600,000 points to blow, and with events costing around 20,000 or so it shouldn't take forever to see them all.

STEER-JERKING

The controls make great use of the Cube's analogue triggers. Unlike most racing games, jamming the accelerator and brakes won't send you sliding smoothly around a corner. You have to balance the amount of pressure you're applying, depending on the surface you're on and the type of vehicle you're in. Because this is tough to judge at first if you're not used to using the triggers' full range (and few games have done so), power bars at the bottom of the screen show how hard you're pressing. So it isn't the kind of game where you can really start throwing the cars



DIRECTIONS
You only get these on the rally courses. As is customary, you have a co-driver shouting helpful information to warn you when there's a corner.

TIMING
Discover your split times and see how far ahead of the opposition you are. Then quit and switch it out of Easy mode – that's just no challenge.

OPEN ROAD
In rally stages like this one, it's just you and your car versus the clock. The normal race tracks have five competitors to race against, each with a pretty decent level of artificial intelligence. They certainly don't simply roll along a preset line, although you'll have to turn up the difficulty to see the best stuff.

POWER METERS
These bars show how much power you're applying to the brake and accelerator pedals. It's not all that useful thanks to the Gamecube's squeezy triggers.



SLIDING OUT
For some reason it's very tricky to get the car to slide like you want it to, even on dirt tracks. Turning off the ABS and braking assistance helps, but don't expect Burnout-style sliding fun.



around after a couple of quick practice laps. With depressing inevitability, pushing it too hard results in an ungainly spin or a trip across the grass.

If you prefer, you can also use the C-stick to control the accelerator and brake, although this means you won't be able to apply both at the same time.

The courses are a mixture of real Grand Prix tracks and fantasy street circuits. We could have done with a bigger selection of both, to be honest, but at least what's there is nicely done. Racing game veterans will probably be sick of seeing the narrow streets of Monaco rendered up yet again (presumably developers can just buy the model off the shelf), and the Suzuka track is another standard fixture in this sort of thing.

Happily, there's definitely some mileage to be had out of experimenting with inappropriate combinations of courses and cars. As you might expect, putting something like a hopped-up Dodge drag racer on anything other than a straight piece of road or a competition sports car onto a dusty rally track results in some interesting spins and a nerve-wracking battle with the controls. To get the best out of it you're really going to need a decent steering wheel. While the standard Gamecube controller is perfectly usable, the game just seems to make more sense when you're wrestling with a nicely sprung wheel and stomping hard on a couple of good, solid pedals. It's a game you really need to fight against before the controls and the physics system really click.

The differences between the types of vehicle are a big help with the learning process. If you can take a powerful single-seater smoothly around the oval track and a



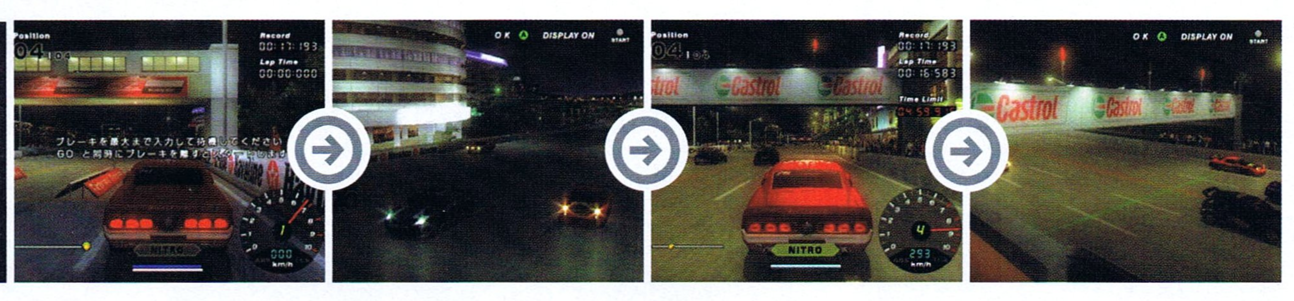
RACING LIFE
Life as a racing lady is tough, particularly when you're an extremely fit former ambulance driver with a penchant for dressing in jumpsuits that are just a little too tight to zip up past your bra. Men don't respect your driving skills (at least, not until you run them off the road) and women try to get one up on you by dressing in even tighter leather overalls. Still, at least you can relax in a nice, steamy shower cut-scene. Oh, Namco…



"Take the cheekiest shortcuts"

LIFE'S A DRAG

As well as the usual sort of driving events, you also get drag racing. That's just a straight bit of road with up to four opponents blasting down it as quickly as possible. The skill comes in timing the start and working the gears. Manual shifting is a significant advantage here.





△ Bang! You don't get penalised at all for smashing into your competitors. Sometimes you might get unlucky and the contact will make you spin out, but it's mostly to your advantage.











△ No, you can't smash those fences down. They're made of solid anti-matter.

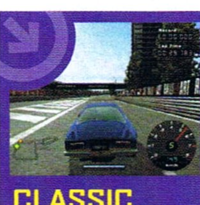


nippy little sports model around one of the Grand Prix circuits, you're pretty much qualified to take on the rally courses.

THAT'S YOUR PLOT

The game is split into two main modes. The first one, a sort of Story mode called Racing Life, is broken into 14 chapters linked by some reasonably good cut-scenes. You play a lady ambulance driver who becomes a would-be racing star. A tale of racing rivalry unfolds as you progress through the tournaments, although the pre-rendered FMV doesn't allow you to do anything to affect the overall plot. You can persistently ram your rivals into the advertising hoardings, take the cheekiest shortcuts across the run-off areas to skip slow chicanes at Monaco and Suzuka, and generally drive like a stock car racer, but the resulting cut-scene won't reflect your actions. It's extremely easy to finish on the default Easy mode, so we'd definitely advise turning the difficulty up once you've won a few races. You can do this at any time during the game, even during the breaks between races in a tournament.

The second big mode is the Event Omnibus, which is a mish-mash of driving challenges such as single races, racing tournaments and the kind of stuff you have to do to win your licence in *Gran Turismo* – stopping within a marked area and so on. You have to purchase the events one by one, paying for them with the points you win by driving well or winning races. To maximise your points potential you'll



CLASSIC CARS

You'll really notice the difference if you go straight from the modern racing machines to the vintage vehicles. After enjoying the benefits of four-wheel drive and traction control, the old cars seem almost undrivably tail-happy, sliding all over the place if you're a bit heavy on the accelerator. There's a little Fiat 500 in there, which is the only one that's genuinely simple to handle.



CRUNCH TIME

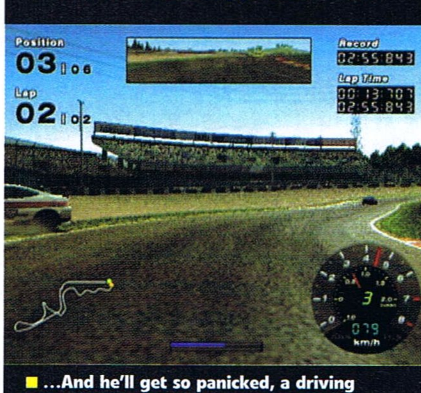
Feeling the pressure yet? Let the computer drivers know you're on their tail…



■ As you approach a computer-controlled car, a bar pops up showing how calm the driver is feeling. An interesting touch.



■ The closer you get, the more pressure he'll feel. Overtake and he'll go back to feeling fine, but stay on his exhaust pipe for a while…



■ …And he'll get so panicked, a driving mistake becomes inevitable. Laugh as he spins out on a corner or crashes into the barrier.

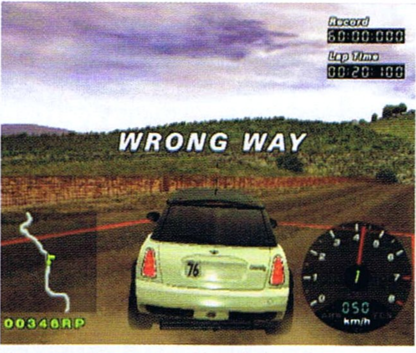
R: RACING EVOLUTION

A Ridge too far?

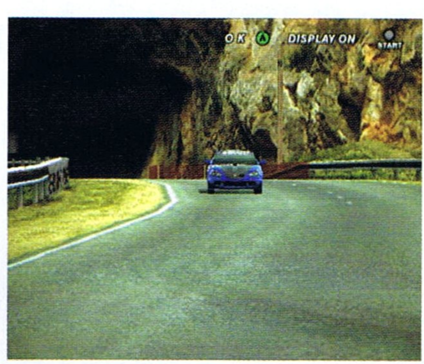


SEE THAT AGAIN

As you'd expect, R: Racing Evolution has the full range of replay cameras to enjoy your exploits after a hard-won race. You have to accept whichever one the game chooses as it cycles through them. We do like a bit of shaky heli-cam in a racing game, but it's a shame you don't get a nice interior view so you can admire the fur-trimmed steering wheel and Alpine CD player.



△ It's a high-speed parking challenge.



△ If this were 20% faster it would be loads better.

need to make use of the game's best feature – the pressure meter.

TIRE PRESSURE

The computer drivers all have built-in personalities, and you can apply pressure to force them into mistakes. The closer you drive, the more pressure they feel, and the more points you rack up. When you've had enough of driving in somebody's slipstream and your rival is feeling truly worried, you can pull out to overtake and force him to make a total hash of his race.

Drivers who've been nobbled like this tend to fall way back down the field, and if you do it a few times during a race not only will you win by miles, you'll have earned enough style points from your bullying tactics to buy large chunks of the Event Omnibus.

This is all great stuff but what lets the game down is its lack of genuine speed thrills. We wanted the cheek-flapping pace of *Burnout* or *Need For Speed Underground*, but at times *R: Racing Evolution* looks pedestrian. Fighting your way up from the back of the pack is a lot of fun but there are only five opponents on the track, and once you're out in front the race is effectively over.

Watching the replays, the only time you'll be convinced that the car is actually travelling at 180mph is when the camera switches to a super-low bumper view, which isn't available while you're playing the game.

And while the car models are very nice, the rest of the graphics have a horrible unfiltered grainy look that's totally hideous if you're using a decent telly. This is probably the only Gamecube title that genuinely looks better on a little portable set, via an RF lead. It's barely any better looking than *Ridge Racer V*, which was one of the PS2 launch games absolutely ages ago.

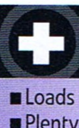
So it's hard to get into, nowhere near as fast as it should be, and hardly the greatest looker to boot. But for some reason we've enjoyed playing *R: Racing Evolution* rather a lot. Not as much as we enjoyed thrashing around in *Burnout 2*, obviously, but the fact that there's a lot of driving skill to learn counts highly in its favour. Not to mention that's it's the only game of its type on Gamecube too. Number one in a field of one.

MARTIN KITTS

> **"PROBABLY THE ONLY GAMECUBE TITLE THAT GENUINELY LOOKS BETTER ON A PORTABLE TELLY"**

CROWD CONTROL

Disappointingly, the trackside spectators in the rally sections are just flat cardboard cutouts. While you won't notice them too much as you speed past them, it's glaringly obvious in screenshots and if you bump into a barrier. Simple 3D models would have looked much better – the crapness of the bystanders highlights the fact that R: Racing Evolution isn't the greatest-looking driving game ever.



- Loads of cars.
- Plenty to unlock.
- Several different driving styles.

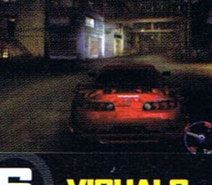


- Grainy graphics.
- Familiar tracks.
- Not the most accessible game.



IF YOU LIKE THIS…

Need For Speed Underground
EA
NGC/88 77%
Very long, a bit jerky, and much easier to handle.



6 VISUALS
The bigger your TV, the more obvious the pixellated graphics.

7 SOUNDS
A handful of pretty abstract tunes and lots of speech.

7 MASTERY
Well, it's nice and smooth, running at 60fps. Thank you.

8 LIFESPAN
Tons to do, and a fairly complicated driving model to master.

VERDICT

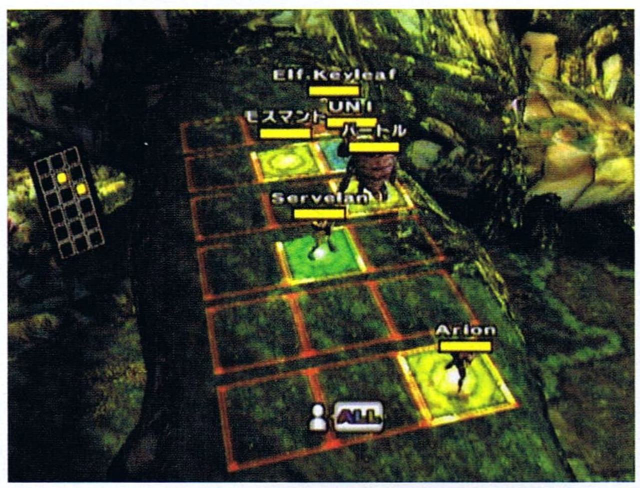
Not brilliant, not bad at all. As long as you're not expecting *Ridge Racer, Burnout* or a *Gran Turismo* beater, you'll have fun with this one.







DID YOU KNOW? Of the 206 bones in the human body, 106 are in the hands and feet. Which are, um, what you use to drive a car. Interesting, no?



△ The camera can be rotated around the grid to show character markers.





△ Cute girlie robots? This game's got THREE. It'll keep Chobits fans happy.



△ There was a joke to be made about hands in iron gloves here but it was rubbish. Instead, take some time to ogle the cute elf girl in the stockings and tiny shorts. Ah, life in the future is surely looking wonderful...

INFO BURST

PUBLISHER	SEGA
DEVELOPER	SONIC TEAM
RELEASE DATE	OUT NOW (JAP)
PLAYERS	1-4
MEMORY CARD PAGES	18+
GBA LINK-UP	YES
SURROUND SOUND	YES
WIDESCREEN	NO
COST	¥6980 (£37)



PHANTASY STAR ONLINE EPISODE 3: C.A.R.D. REVOLUTION

Demons, evil plots and space clowns who listen to Jean-Michelle Jarre. Another *PSO* game, anyone?



△ Some git in Tokyo prepares to have a good laugh at our expense.



△ Kranz avails himself of Red Ring Rico's handguns. They're still rubbish.



△ A Sinow prepares to teach Kranz the secret of peaceful, relaxing sleep.

The rave version of Smells Like Teen Spirit, a *Final Fantasy* game with pop music in it and now *Phantasy Star Online* is being turned into a collectible card game. It never rains but it pours.

Don't be too hasty to burn your Gamecube if this gives you visions of Yuji Naka disappearing into the sunset with everyone's cash. *PSO3: C.A.R.D. Revolution* is actually a hybrid – it's half CCG and half *Advance Wars*-style grid-based combat. This is the setup as you return to Pioneer 2, 21 years after the second game, to take tactical control of a series of battles between the heroic Hunters on one side and the dark Arkz on the other.

The game mechanic, like all good strategy games, is simple on the surface. At the start of each turn everyone rolls dice for points, which then have to be divvied up among actions. Moving or attacking costs points, and card costs vary depending on whether you're playing a simple Sabre or a nightmare like the Soul Eater.

The difference in gameplay between sides is an interesting one. Hunters go out armed to the teeth, and while they lose a hit point for each piece of equipment (guns, shields, mags, etc) that gets destroyed, they cannot be directly harmed until all of it's gone. Arkz, by contrast, can be damaged at any time. Unfortunately, there is the tiny matter of getting past the small army of Nanodragons under their control before you even get that far.

C.A.R.D. SHARP

As online experiences go, *PSO3* is pretty breathtaking. Picking one of the many unlockable characters and tailoring a deck to them leads to amazing intellectual rewards and reveals hidden depths – the sheer tactical scope of the game is astonishing. Of course, this does cause a problem of sorts, because it forces you to invest a great deal of

DID YOU KNOW? Geraint's memory card with his level 90 *PSO* character was nicked recently. If you spot his new starting character online, help him out!

THE DEAD MAN'S HAND

That's the way we like it baby, we don't wanna live forever…



1. SWAB YOUR DECK
Choose from underage elves, moody hunters and dancing robots, then tailor a deck of 30 weapons, attacks, items, monsters and spells to suit their talents.



2. SIZE UP YOUR PREY
Go to the information counter and check tournament listings. These are made automatically, so once you've found a populated game, one click and you're in.



3. SADDLE UP
Every Hunter has a base damage rating for using their fists, but playing weapon and Mag cards can send it up indecently high. Each weapon has a different range.



4. SUMMON THE HORDES
The Arkz do their (rather funky) thing and the grid fills up with dragons, bears, sorcerors, centaurs and battle droids. Or, if you're like us, Rappies.



5. DESTROY HIM
Hunters and Arkz look at what they can hit with which weapons and monsters, and play special attack or spell cards with which to fiddle with the numbers.



6. DEFEND YOURSELF
Stare at the multi-hitting mag-enhanced powered-up 360° sword swing headed your way. Look at the defence cards you have in your hand. Commence weeping.



7. GOOD NIGHT
Gluster, or 'Elvish Presley' as we call him, has won this match. This will net him experience points and extra cards. The loser is punished for failure accordingly.



8. PARTY IN SPACE!
Dust yourself down, grind your teeth down to stumps with anger that you lost experience points, then it's all back to Pioneer 2… to GET DOWN!



△ It clearly uses the same Dreamcast-standard graphics engine as previous *PSO* titles.

△ Get yourself in a battle against a superior deck and you're going to end up looking a bit foolish.



△ And the European release? It seems unlikely, as Sega can't justify the expense of translating it. Boo!

time in the game. Battles last up to half an hour, and if you get yourself into a tournament there'll be another and maybe even another one after that. Furthermore, finding a battle on your own level has never been so important. There's no joy in playing with a high-level player when you start because you're likely to be defeated and go off with a black cloud of impotent rage over your head. However, when you've a well-honed deck to hand, even veterans will yield, resulting in more experience points than you'll gain from thrashing the COM (CPU-controlled) players. Thankfully the cooperative nature of *PSO* has not been lost. It's possible to play two-on-two, resulting in a rich experience as you have a great time plotting out strategies with your teammate. Sharing the joy of victory is something that gives this game the edge over other card-based titles that lack that vital, online element.

> **"PICKING ONE OF THE MANY UNLOCKABLE CHARACTERS AND TAILORING A DECK TO THEM LEADS TO AMAZING REWARDS"**

Excellent as it is, it would be churlish to criticise *Episode 3* purely for its card-based nature. What you'll want to know is whether or not you should import it if you don't know any Japanese. Briefly: only if you've got an Action Replay and can use the translation cheat (see page 95). Otherwise, without a knowledge of katakana you'll get stuck when the game tells you what kind of decks to build. This all adds on to the *pages* of story text and anime plot visuals in the game which will pass you by – and then you'll face the horror of having to start it all over again in February when the US version comes out.

RACHEL RYAN & SIMON DOMINGUEZ



BUY STUFF!
Having certain Sega game saves on your memory card will trigger special 'Event Cards' being added to your deck. Above is the awesome Hallowe'en Rappy which is yours if you got the PSO3 demo some months ago. You can get more from playing other Sonic Team games like Sonic Adventure and Billy Hatcher.



- Rich, absorbing and rewarding.
- Brilliant online.
- Loads of plot.

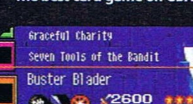


- Same old graphics.
- Feels rushed.
- Do you really have this much free time?

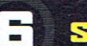


IF YOU LIKE THIS…

Yu-Gi-Oh! Worldwide Edition
Konami
NGC/75 68%
Strategies and silly hairdos. The best card game on GBA.





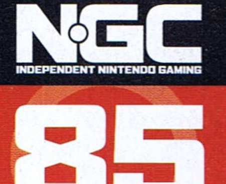
7 VISUALS
Beautiful design, but the same graphics as the original.

6 SOUNDS
Elevator music. Again. Back of the class, Sonic Team.

8 MASTERY
Staggering depth marred slightly by annoying touches.

10 LIFESPAN
It's head-in-the-oven time if you lose your save on this one.

VERDICT
A Japanese gameplaying endeavour which is epic to the point of inconvenience. Or, in English: time to quit your job.



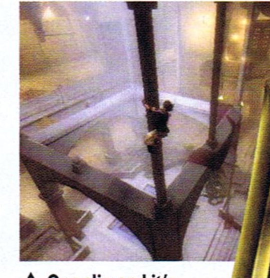
85

"Rotating blades, spring-loaded spikes and saws"





Δ The camera doesn't always give the most helpful view during a fight.



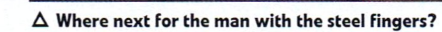
Δ One slip and it's curtains for you.



Δ As ever, it's a long way down and there's no way to turn back.



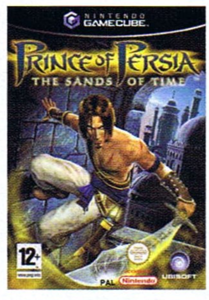
Δ Keep holding the right shoulder button to raise your guard.



Δ Where next for the man with the steel fingers?

INFO BURST

PUBLISHER	UBI SOFT
DEVELOPER	UBI SOFT
RELEASE DATE	OUT NOW (US)
PLAYERS	1
MEMORY CARD PAGES	15
GBA LINK-UP	NO
SURROUND SOUND	YES
WIDESCREEN	YES
COST	$50



PRINCE OF PERSIA THE SANDS OF TIME

Swashing buckles and hanging from cliffs. His name is Prince…

NGC STAR GAME



Δ Farah is perfectly capable of taking care of herself for a while.



A classic 2D platform game redone in 3D, without losing any of the feeling and atmosphere that made it so great in The Old Days™? We haven't seen that done for a while, at least not properly.

This is the second attempt to bring Jordan Mechner's 16-bit blinder *Prince of Persia* to a new generation of gamers and games machines, and if this one has underperformed rather worryingly in the import charts so far it's probably because the entire series has had its reputation besmirched by poor sequels, the most culpable of which is the weedy *Prince of Persia 3D* for PC.

Luckily the only *Prince of Persia* game that *Sands of Time* has anything to do with is the very first one, the good one. It's Year Zero for the franchise all over again, and this incredible reimagining of *Prince of Persia* is about as good a platform game as you're likely to see.



FIGHTERS DESTINY

While the best parts of the game are the cliff-hanging jumps and acrobatic moves, you'll always have loads of fighting to take care of. It takes a while to get used to, but once you know how it works you'll win every fight with relative ease. Our tip is to keep blocking at all times, and press the joystick in the direction of downed enemies to kill them.

PRINCE OF WAILS

You play the young Prince, eager to prove himself worthy of his father's kingdom. Unfortunately your youthful enthusiasm leads you to accidentally unleash the Sands of Time, thereby turning every inhabitant of the palace, Daddy included, into a blood-crazy zombie. Like, whoops! My bad!

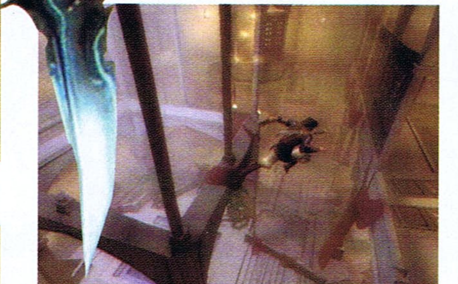
To make amends for this indiscretion you set off on a mission to return the Sands to their rightful home – an hourglass that used to sit in the King's front room.

However, this too has been spirited away (by giant mutant birds) and the nefarious Vizier, once your old man's slightly sinister servant, has now

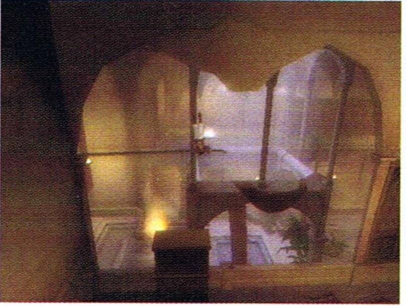
PRINCE OF PERSIA

He's finding sand in the desert

△ Phew! Prince is bowled over by his own armpit stink.



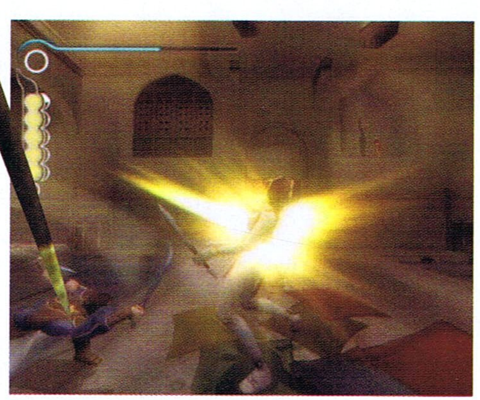
△ There's a lot of computer assistance to help you grab ledges and hold bars. You'll need it.



△ Just a quick swing around this bar, then flip over to those columns and start climbing.



△ Flies through the air with the greatest of ease.



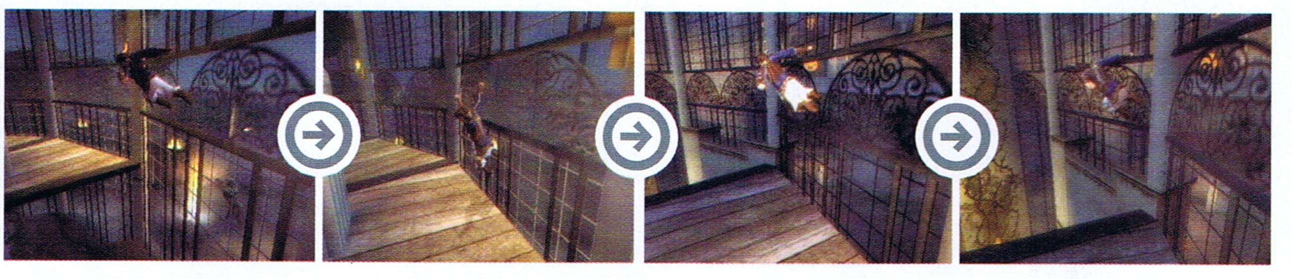
△ Have some! Stab her to regain some power.



△ Fights against enemies like this can be a bit tedious. You can't use your handy vaulting attack on these chaps so you need to keep guarding and chopping until you get the chance to dagger them.

SPIDER MAN

The ability to run along a vertical wall is Prince's most important basic move. He has to do it at some point in almost every single room, but there are still times when you'll stare at a big gap and wonder if it's even possible to make it.



officially gone fully Evil and wants the Sands for himself.

So what's a boy to do? As the sole surviving member of the royal family it's your job to defeat the nasty Vizier (everything was probably his fault anyway) and take your seat on the throne vacated by poor old Pops. It's what he would have wanted.

DUCHY ORIGINALS

Finding the Sands is no simple matter, particularly after you decide to pull the switch that makes the palace's deadly array of rotating blades, spring-loaded spikes and circular saws erupt into Prince-mincing action.

Hopeless klutz though he may be, the Prince takes one big plus point into his mission – he's arguably the greatest athlete the world has ever seen. Seriously, this fella can do the kind of things Neo did in The Matrix, and it's worked into the game so perfectly, the lead character becomes an extension of your own thumbs.

Got an impossible gap that needs to be crossed? Run towards the wall while holding the right shoulder trigger, and watch the Prince zoom across it like a rider on the Wall Of Death.

Need to swing between horizontal bars or leap from vertical columns? It's all done seamlessly with a simple tap on a button or two. After barely any practice at all you'll be stringing together whole sequences of acrobatic moves that take the Prince from one side of a room to another and all the way up to the dizzying heights found at the tops of the towering levels.

The game is all about finding the correct route through to tricky parts of the palace, solving the odd puzzle or two as you go.

Leaping across chasms, running along the walls, dangling from crumbling ledges and flipping through the air like a trapeze artist. These are the Prince's stock-in-trade and, filmed

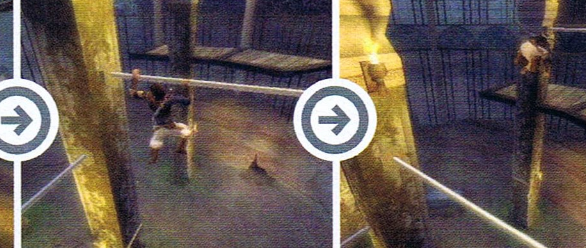
> **"STRING TOGETHER SEQUENCES OF ACROBATIC MOVES THAT TAKE THE PRINCE FROM ONE SIDE OF A ROOM TO ANOTHER"**

NICE BONUS

The complete original Prince of Persia game has been included as an unlockable extra. You'll find it before the halfway point in your adventure (about four hours or so) and if you miss it you'll get it anyway when you complete the main game. It's not the greatest version, as it's all redrawn with SNES-style graphics that aren't as nice as the minimalist originals.

SWING LOW

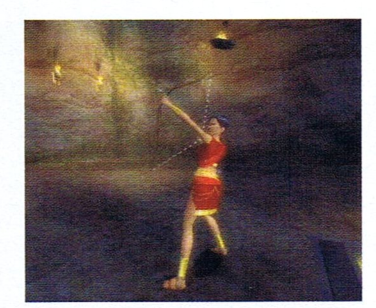
We're sure other games have included this sort of acrobatic stuff in the past. What's beyond doubt is that Prince of Persia *does it better, more intuitively and more spectacularly than anything else. These bits truly are a joy to control.*



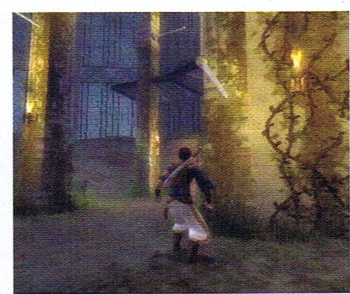


△ Nicely parried. When your guard is up you automatically deflect everything except low attacks.



△ The water effects are pretty good, as you can't tell from this screenshot.

△ When Farah spots something undead she starts shooting. A natural reaction.



△ One simple pole leads to a massive acrobatic sequence. It all starts here.







PLAY IT AGAIN

Just fallen to your doom? Hold the rewind button until you're back on solid ground!

through the game's reasonably intelligent cinematic camera, which seems to know exactly the right moment to change angles or provide a quick cutaway, it looks spectacular.

CARBUNCLES

Quite aside from a house that wants to tear him a few new holes, the other thing the Prince has to contend with is the small matter of the zombie army he managed to unleash.

Re-animated by the Sands of Time, these creatures are interested only in a spot of carnage. They arrive in a nifty warping special effect, and don't leave until you've disposed of every single one in the current location.

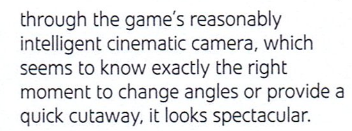
Doing this can take a fair bit of time. The original *Prince of Persia* gave you tough enemies to fight one at a time. This one has loads of creatures which aren't weedy enough to be a pushover but are rarely tough enough to offer much of a challenge.

The fights look great, even if they're not as good as those in *Zelda: The Wind Waker*, which still sets the standard for this sort of thing. You'll want to use as many moves as possible, simply because it's so impressive to watch.

HEIRHEAD

To spice things up a little you can use the power of the Sands to mess around with time itself.

The more power that you acquire by absorbing the energy from the enemies that you've defeated, the more often you can use the smart slow motion feature. It gives a nice, hazy, drunken sort of effect, with everything all blurred up and woozy. If that description doesn't quite work for you,



STRENGTH IN NUMBERS

Each individual enemy is reasonably easy to kill. In fact the combat would be ridiculously simple if you only ever had to fight lone enemies, so what they lack in toughness is compensated for by weight of numbers. You tend to face four enemies at once, with new ones beaming in as soon as you've managed to suck the sand out of one.

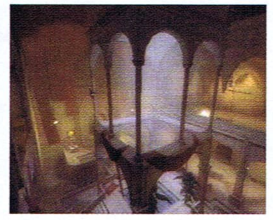
PRINCE OF PERSIA

He's finding sand in the desert

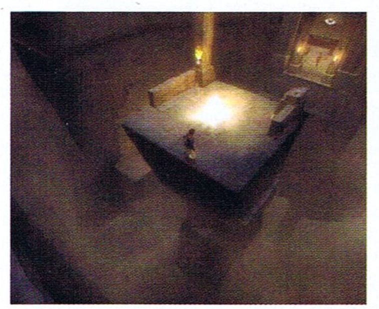


△ You might want to smash up obstacles like these tables. There are no items hidden inside but the fighting is easier when there's not so much junk to trip over or get trapped behind.





△ When there are loads of enemies to kill, Mega Freeze is handy.





△ Even though most of the time you'll be exploring and searching for possible routes across the room, there's a great feeling of pace and excitement throughout.



△ You can centre the camera behind the Prince for the best combat view, or pull it back into the environment for a wide view.

PRINCE'S TUNA CHUNKS

Just a few of the things Persian royalty gets up to on a lazy afternoon…



DRAGGING STUFF

It's very easy to drag heavy pieces of furniture, presumably because there's all this sand all over the floor to lubricate it. See how Prince shifts a giant wardrobe.



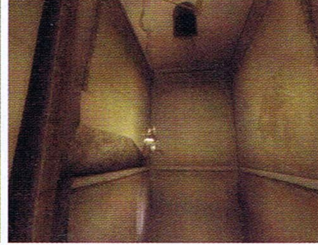
FREEZING STUFF

Now that he's the master of time and all that, our Prince can bamboozle his enemies using the Mega Freeze attack. You need loads of sand tanks for this.



KILLING STUFF

When he isn't freezing and dragging, there's nothing Prince likes better than to kill some things. He uses a sword to chop them up and a dagger for stabby-stabby.



JUMPING

This man can jump all day. He's quick enough to jump from one wall to another, thusly working his way to the top of a shaft exactly like in Mario 64.

let's just say it's the best of its type that we've ever seen.

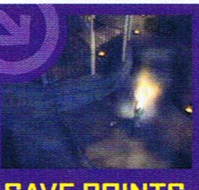
If you want to splurge all of your power in one go, you can use the Mega Freeze option to stop everything dead in its tracks and despatch loads of enemies moments after they beam in to a curiously static world. But the best and most common use of your power is to rewind time. It's a combination of extra lives and something completely new. You can use up one unit of Sand to rewind the action 10 seconds or so, which is exactly what you need when you've just dashed the Prince's brains out on a rock or wandered into a deadly torso-chopper.

Without it, this would be one severely harsh game. With the rewind option you've got the chance to avoid getting mauled in a battle, or step back onto the ledge you just dived off. You also have to look out for Farah, a girl who's one of the few survivors and is none too pleased that you've recently wiped out her family. For some reason she decides to join your quest and provides invaluable help throughout. Of course, this means you have to watch out to make sure she doesn't get killed, but most of the time she can take care of herself. When the Prince meets up with her, they tell the story as they chat about the situation. This, coupled with a voice-over from the Prince, gives a rich plot without using cut-scenes.

The game reeks of quality from start to finish. Maybe there's too much fighting, and you'll see a lot of similarly themed puzzles, but when it looks this cinematic and plays this intuitively, it's possible to forgive almost anything. The decision to release it on PS2 first, holding back the Gamecube release in Europe while shipping it in America, backfired badly. We'll just have to keep our fingers crossed and hope the poor PS2 sales don't harm the Gamecube version, because it really is a must-buy.

MARTIN KITTS

> **"IF YOU WANT TO SPLURGE ALL OF YOUR POWER IN ONE GO, YOU CAN USE THE MEGA FREEZE OPTION TO STOP EVERYTHING"**



SAVE POINTS

It's the yellow pillar of light, and you'll breathe a sigh of relief whenever you encounter one of these. Not only can you save there whenever you like, you can also watch a quick preview 'vision' of what you're about to experience in the next section of the game. If you get stuck, return to the light and watch the vision again. You'll soon spot what you're meant to do.



- Cunning puzzles.
- Excellent levels.
- Easy controls.
- Great animation.



- Too many minions to fight.
- Voices samples aren't clear enough.

IF YOU LIKE THIS...

Super Mario Sunshine
Nintendo
NGC/73 96%
Gamecube's other great platform game. More varied than *Prince*.



9 VISUALS
Nice animation and atmospheric backgrounds. Great!

7 SOUNDS
Good sound effects; music only kicks in when it needs to.

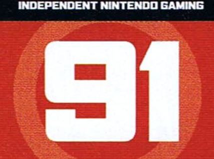
9 MASTERY
Classic 2D platformer becomes classic 3D platformer. Classic!

8 LIFESPAN
Worth replaying for the bonus game and the sheer thrill of it.

VERDICT

In its own way, this is every bit as successful a 3D update as the likes of *Mario* and *Metroid*. A seriously enjoyable game.







ANIMAL MAGIC

You have to seek out any wildlife you've not encountered and take a snap. The data is automatically downloaded to a science centre, which transfers money to your bank.



PICTURE PERFECT

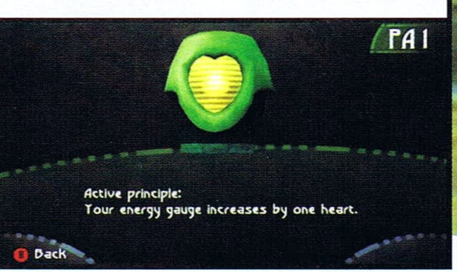
The game really excels in terms of the beauty of the environments. Highlights include lovely sunsets in the game's main town, cruising across the ocean while dolphin-like creatures leap out of the water in front of your cockpit, and the stunningly luminous plantlife in the dungeons.

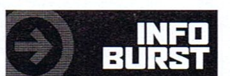
JADE

The heroine of the game, and a very versatile character she is too. Fortunately, controlling her is simple as the vast majority of her actions are context-sensitive, allowing her to jump, hang on to ledges and so on without much need for work on your part. Whenever you encounter enemies, she'll lock on to them automatically.

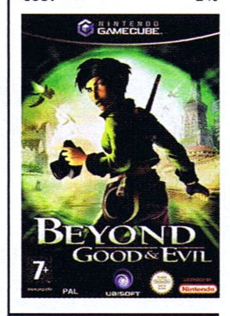
ZELDA ANYONE?

Like in Nintendo's adventure, you can expand your heart meter, usually after boss battles. The symbols around your health bar are assigned to context-sensitive buttons.





PUBLISHER	UBI SOFT
DEVELOPER	UBI SOFT
RELEASE DATE	OUT NOW (US)
PLAYERS	1
MEMORY CARD PAGES	55
GBA LINK-UP	NO
SURROUND SOUND	YES
WIDESCREEN	YES
COST	£40



BEYOND GOOD AND EVIL

From the creator of Rayman, comes a beautifully realised adventure…



The effort that's gone into the production of *Beyond Good and Evil* is evident from the game's opening moments. The intro shows the lead character, Jade, and her porcine companion, Uncle Pey'j, under attack from an alien race. Their lighthouse-cum-orphanage is hit, and the subsequent battle (which makes up the 'training' section) kicks in. Control is fluid and responsive, the environments are both alive with life and solid in construction, while the presentation – along with a quite exceptional score – is enough to convince you that this is truly something special. And it is.

ROVING REPORTER

Beyond Good and Evil all takes place in a beautifully coherent world. From your lighthouse homestead where you begin, you're introduced to two of the game's most important elements. First of all there's your camera. Due to the war against the aliens, you need to keep tabs on all the wildlife in the game world. Find a new species and snap it – simple as that.

These photos are then turned into money that you can use to buy extra health and personal upgrades. The camera also acts as your character's first-person mode, allowing you to spy on anything of interest.

Secondary to your camera is your hovercraft. Much like the boat in *Wind Waker*, this is your means of navigating the vast game-world, both on land and on water. It's upgradable too and eventually you're able to take to the skies to explore more of the landscape.

Both of these tools bring about a wonderful sense of freedom to the

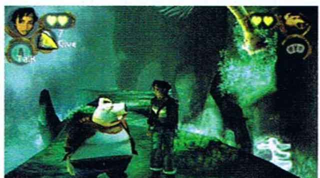


ON YOUR MARKS

There are plenty of diversions from the main game. These take the form of bar-style mini-games (like a variation of air-hockey) as well as hover-craft races. These are all surprisingly accomplished and a great laugh in their own right. Winning them can also help your quest by giving you extra currency for upgrades and the like.

YOU'VE GOT A FRIEND IN ME

You'll never walk alone…



Pey'j. This talking pig is, by Jade's own admission, her 'Uncle'. We're not quite entirely convinced about the biology behind that particular phenomenon.



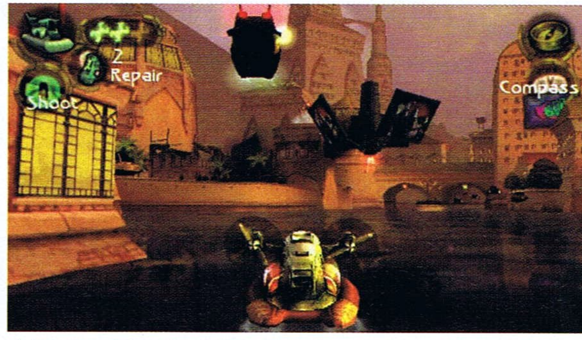
He's a handy old swine to have about, though, with context-sensitive actions like a butt-slam to help stun enemies and a wrench to open blocked corridors.



He's not too handy in battle. Frequently getting trapped by enemies, you have to listen out for his cries for help. If Pey'j is damaged you can share health with him.



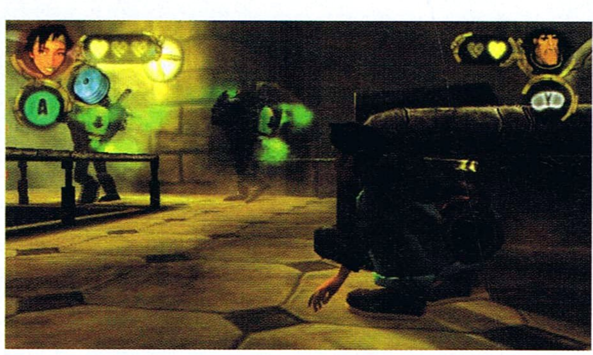
At various stages in the plot you'll also have other people to assist you. In this case a captured agent offers his services against this dungeon boss.



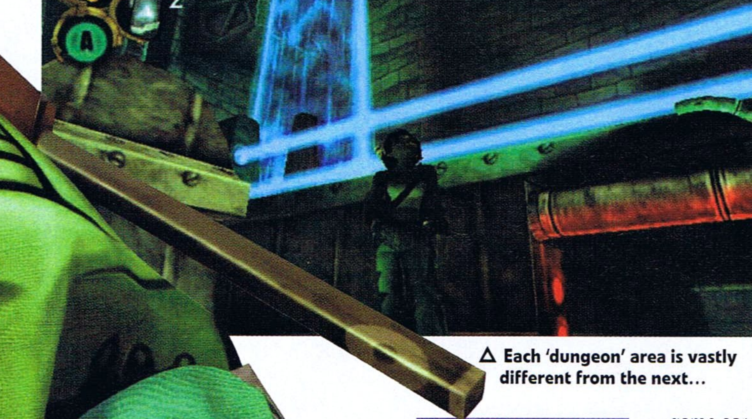
△ The town is bustling with activity. You can also enter races here.



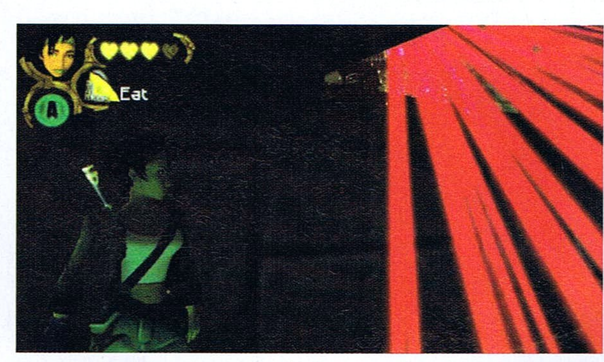




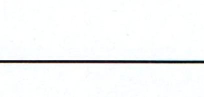
△ Stealth is well used – hitting enemies' fuel tanks takes them out.



△ Each 'dungeon' area is vastly different from the next…



△ …there's such a wide range of tasks to complete, from simple switch puzzles to nail-biting stealth sections, that they're rarely a chore.



READ ALL ABOUT IT!

In the game's main town, you can subscribe to two email papers. These fill you in on news and propaganda from the game-world. It's a cracking addition that really helps to build up a sense of place. Touches like this only reinforce the sense of mystery and keep you absorbed in the conspiracy you're fighting against.

game as you search for animals and any nooks and crannies that may have escaped you. However, the game isn't *quite* as free-roaming as it would have you believe, with the storyline forcing you through a series of events. This is by no means a bad thing. Much like in *Zelda*, exploration and communication with the game's inhabitants inevitably leads to you penetrating an enemy base or installation, dabbling in the a variety of (intelligently worked) puzzles and facing off against the inevitable boss.

Beyond Good and Evil is all solid adventure game territory, then, but it's all been wonderfully worked. The atmosphere and gameplay are pitched spot-on throughout, with a satisfying blend of both action and stealth elements sitting alongside some wonderfully diverting extras, such as hovercraft-racing minigames.

> **"A SATISFYING BLEND OF BOTH ACTION AND STEALTH ELEMENTS PLUS SOME DIVERTING EXTRAS"**

It's a shame then, that this excellent adventure is languishing outside the top 40 in the all-formats charts (thanks to its pre-Christmas PS2 exclusivity). And it's something that you, the more discerning Gamecube owner, should put right when it hits the UK in March…

GERAINT EVANS



- Gorgeous visuals.
- Atmospheric.
- Huge game world.
- Clever puzzles.



- Not very difficult.
- It isn't getting the recognition it so richly deserves.



IF YOU LIKE THIS…

Zelda: Wind Waker
Nintendo
NGC/79 97%
Sea-faring, dungeon hopping action-adventure. As if you didn't know.



8 VISUALS
Crisp, smooth and detailed with stunning art direction

9 SOUNDS
Lovely music and speech. A very cinematic adventure.

8 MASTERY
A huge world to explore and it's all extremely detailed.

7 LIFESPAN
It's not exactly the toughest game in the world, but it's sizeable.

VERDICT
Excellent production values make this an absorbing and incredibly rich experience that's very difficult to fault. Highly recommended.

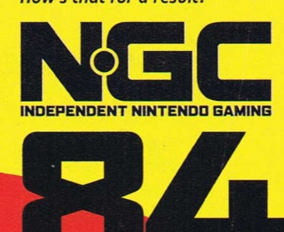


86



WHAT WE SAID IN ISSUE 89…

At long last Pokémon *becomes a proper 3D RPG, and you don't have to be ashamed of liking it if you're over 12 years old. Plus it's a massive expansion for the GBA's* Ruby *and* Sapphire. *How's that for a result?*



POKÉMON COLOSSEUM

New and updated! We take a fresh look at one of the biggest games of the year…


Well, we couldn't just leave it with last month's eight-page review of the Japanese version. There's even more to the excellent RPG mode than we previously suspected, and to help you out if you are struggling through all that impenetrable text, we've put together some brand-new screens and info.

Of course, if you'd rather not know anything else about the game before playing the UK version when it's released in March, close your eyes and skip past these Pikachu-coloured pages.

Still here? Well then, here's another look at what you can expect to see when Nintendo's biggest franchise gets an unexpectedly good reworking.

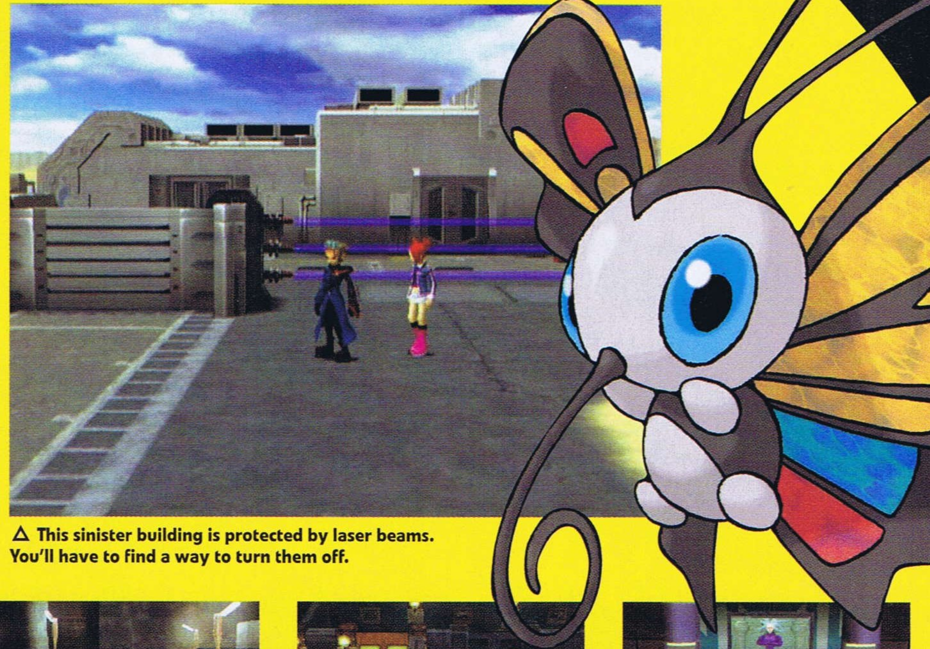
There are new locations, new techniques, new characters and some interesting situations to escape from. Which you mostly do by starting organised animal fights.



▲ There's something odd going on in the basement of this shop. Actually, there's something odd going on almost everywhere.



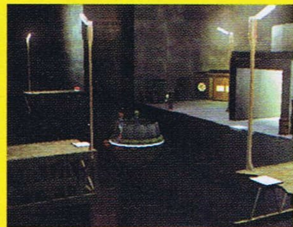
△ A halo of fire for the lead monster in our party. Looks pretty, doesn't it? Unfortunately it also killed him stone dead, but that's the price you pay.



△ This sinister building is protected by laser beams. You'll have to find a way to turn them off.











STICKY SITUATIONS

We pick up the story with our hero having befriended a bunch of primary school outlaws, who are promptly chucked in the slammer for messing with The Man…

JAILBREAKING, POKÉMON STYLE…



That pesky police chief has our buddies locked in the cells, where they are about to have their toenails extracted. Maybe.

So how do we break them out of this rat-infested hole? Hmm, let's think… How about checking out this shiny object?

Brilliant! It's the key to the cells – all of them. And the guards don't seem to mind if you start freeing the prisoners. Fine.

Here are the two we've been looking for. They have the essential elevator key required to access the undercity.

GOING UNDERGROUND…



With the lift key safely stored inside his magic pockets, our hero locates this previously inoperative elevator.

It leads down to a hefty undercity area that looks a bit like something out of Total Recall. But without so many mutants.

What's in here then? Our hero enters a department store/bar/love hotel, in search of fireworks and booze.

Across the far end of the city you'll find a second elevator that pops up on the map screen, for convenient undercity access.

CHILD'S PLAY

The powers of evil are out there, snatching monsters and doing dark deeds. But the kids have the best toys…



Appropriately for a *Pokémon* game, the clued-up people tend to be children. Like these ones.



The undercity area is where you'll find the Resistence HQ, led by slightly older children. They managed to build this monster of a satellite dish, for picking up illegal broadcasts from Germany while their parents are asleep.

FIGHT NIGHT

Naturally, the vast majority of the game is spent battling monsters of every size and description. Just like previous Pokémon *titles it's all about levelling up and knowing how to use your creatures to the best advantage in a fight.*





△ Our hero is older and bigger than these fellas, and according to the Law of the Playground he's perfectly entitled to beat them all up and steal their dinner money.

So is this honestly the game that's going to revitalise the Pokémon franchise? While we can't really see anything restoring Pikachu and the gang to the kind of prominence they enjoyed when the *Pokémon* craze was at its height a few years ago, *Colosseum* is exactly the sort of thing we were crying out for on the N64.

To recap last month's Japanese import review, this is a comprehensive *Ruby/Sapphire* update of *Pokémon Stadium* with a chunky helping of 3D roleplaying thrown in. Needless to say it would have totally cleaned up had it been on N64, but at least the delay has afforded it snazzier graphics than would have been possible on the old console.

You play a face-painted Pokémon adventurer piloting a turbocharged unicycle around an all-new desert wasteland of a game world. Assisted by a psychic girl and an underground resistance network made up exclusively of very small children, your mission is to



△ Don't try it, chumps – any more of that and our Pichu will rip you a new one.



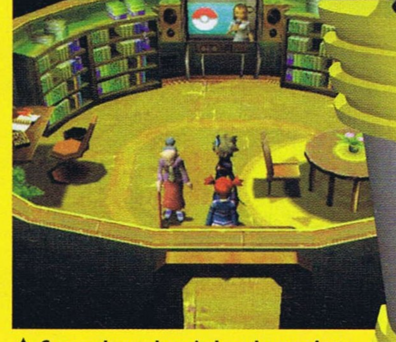
△ You can store your creatures in three different boxes.



△ He's ten feet tall! Twelve feet with the hair!



△ If you go down to the woods today…


△ Granny keeps her circle-o-house clean.








rescue around 50 Dark Pokémon, uncover the secret lair of the evil Team Shadow and discover who's behind their sinister plans to rule the Pokéworld. All that's predictable enough, but it's still a welcome change from the storyline that's been wheeled out in each of the many Game Boy versions. This time there's no innocent monster-collecting and no long grass to riffle through as you search for low-level wild creatures. You're pitched straight into battles at level 30 or above, with new monsters added to your team only by snatching them from other trainers during a battle.

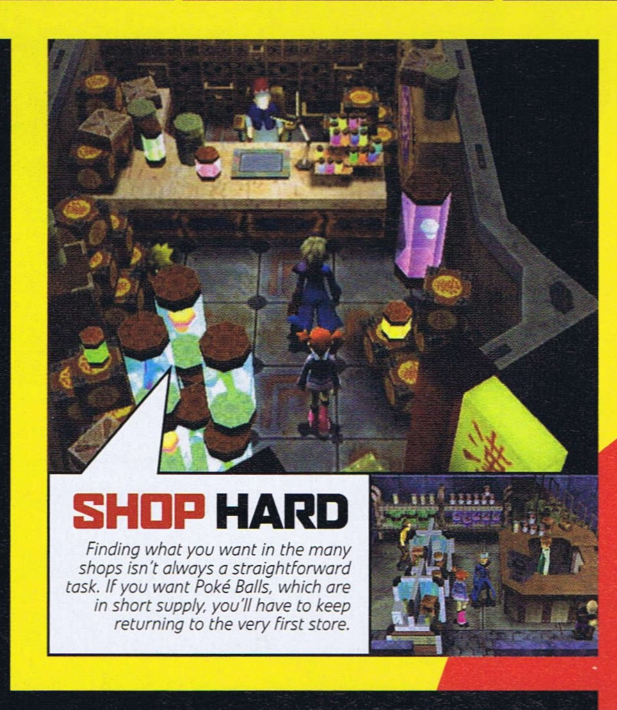
The aim is to heal all the Dark Pokémon you find, an epic task which you can only accomplish by rotating your team of six so that every monster gains sufficient experience.

Naturally this takes a whole lot of patient, methodical battling. And it appears to be the case that you can't find every monster on a single play – you're going to have to go through it a couple of times if you really want to catch 'em all.

"YOU CAN'T FIND EVERY MONSTER ON A SINGLE PLAY – YOU'RE GOING TO HAVE TO GO THROUGH IT A COUPLE OF TIMES"

Coupled with the 3D battling appeal of the main Colosseum mode, it's clear that the *Pokémon* team are still right on top of their game.

We'll have a UK review and a whole heap of strategies and tips for this one very soon. No doubt it's going to make a bit more sense in English.



SHOP HARD

Finding what you want in the many shops isn't always a straightforward task. If you want Poké Balls, which are in short supply, you'll have to keep returning to the very first store.

FIVE FOR A PRIZE!

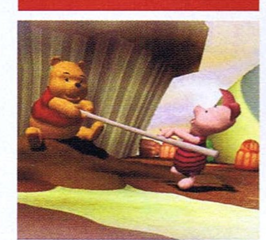
Over the next few pages, you'll see a selection of Top Fives – games hand-picked by us which we recommend anyone new to Nintendo Gamecube gets involved with. Now we want yours. They can be any regular category of game, or something a little different (your five favourite multiplayer games, five games with brilliant endings etc). Send us your Top Five list and earn yourself a priceless (or, more likely, worthless) prize!

N·GC ESSENTIAL

THE BEST 'CUBE GAMES MONEY CAN BUY...

TOP FIVE PIGS IN GC GAMES

Uncle Pey'j in *Beyond Good and Evil* has made us realise that there just aren't enough pigs in games...



PIGLET



PILOSWINE



ZELDA PORKER



SWINUB

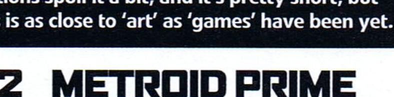


UNCLE PEY'J









1 THE LEGEND OF ZELDA THE WIND WAKER — 97

NINTENDO ■ NGC/79

The babbling nonsense of the internet whingers faded to a stunned silence when "Nu Celda" finally hit the shelves. It's an interactive experience that's as exquisitely fashioned as a Disney feature film, and doesn't lose any of the gameplay for it. Some interminable sailing sections spoil it a bit, and it's pretty short, but this is as close to 'art' as 'games' have been yet.

NGC STAR GAME

2 METROID PRIME — 97



NINTENDO ■ NGC/79

A polished, addictive, stunningly immersive adventure-cum-shooter-cum-platformer that will make you cry when it's over. Pushes the envelope in every field. Classic.

NGC STAR GAME

3 SUPER MARIO SUNSHINE — 96



NINTENDO ■ NGC/73

Mazza's cleaning up oily muck on a tropical island put there by an evil villain. With all the intuitiveness, polished visuals and sense of pure fun of *Mario 64*, this pushes all the right buttons.

NGC STAR GAME

4 MARIO KART DOUBLE DASH!! — 93



NINTENDO ■ NGC/88

The best *Mario Kart* ever – and that's saying something. More characters than before, character-specific weapons and crazy tracks. *And* it's the best multi-player game on GC.

NGC STAR GAME

5 F-ZERO GX — 93



NINTENDO ■ NGC/85

Speed, challenge and stunningly designed tracks blended to form the finest of arcade racing experiences. And it really is fast. You won't put up with slowdown again.

NGC STAR GAME

6 SOUL CALIBUR 2 — 92



NINTENDO ■ NGC/86

The best fighting game on *any* system. It's one of the best-looking games you'll have ever seen and offers rich depths to those who go looking. And you can go nuts with Link.

NGC STAR GAME

7 TIMESPLITTERS 2 — 92



EIDOS ■ NGC/72

A stonker of a time-travelling FPS with more than a whiff of *GoldenEye*, *Timesplitters 2* crept out of nowhere to officially become Gamecube's finest example of the genre. Wick!

NGC STAR GAME

8 SUPER SMASH BROS MELEE — 91



NINTENDO ■ NGC/68

Eye-singeing multiplayer, ingenious moves, cameos from about every Nintendo character ever, and some of the sweetest looks yet squeezed from the Cube.

NGC STAR GAME

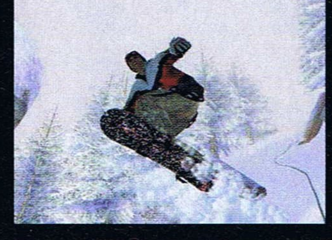
TOP TEN GBA GAMES

9 WAVE RACE BLUE STORM


NINTENDO ■ NGC/67

Slight frame-rate problems in PAL, but *Blue Storm* is still a fabulous racer, replete with *the* most incredible water effects ever. Fast, dynamic, accessible and sublime to control.

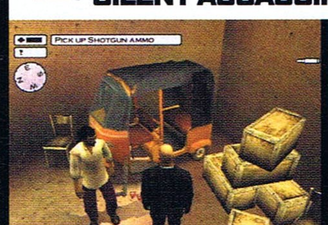
15 1080° AVALANCHE

NINTENDO ■ NGC/89

Small, but perfectly formed snowboarding game with assured courses. Fewer tricks involved than in *SSX3* – more of a racer than an extreme sports title. You'll grow to love it.

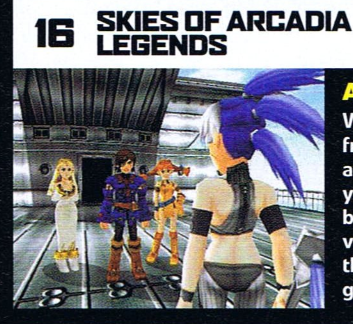
10 HITMAN 2 SILENT ASSASSIN 91



EIDOS ■ NGC/82

Tighten the fibre-wire and leave your morals at the door as Mr 47 brings his potent elimination simulation, freshly polished-up, to the 'Cube. This is stealthy, free-form gaming at its finest.

16 SKIES OF ARCADIA LEGENDS 90



ATARI ■ NGC/81

Vast boat-based RPG ported from the Dreamcast. "It'll take away a chunk of your life and you won't want it back", says a man versed in such things. It's very good, apparently.



11 VIEWTIFUL JOE 90



CAPCOM ■ NGC/80

Side-scrolling 2D beat-'em-up, in which Capcom want to make you feel you're editing a movie while playing a game. It works. Distinctive looks are the icing on the cake.



17 CONFLICT DESERT STORM 2




SCI ■ NGC/86

War? Like Georgie-boy Bush, we just can't get enough of it. You're not allowed to let any of your men die in this sequel, which leads to all sorts of life-saving heroic gameplay.



12 WORMS 3D


SEGA ■ NGC/87

Essentially turn-based strategy, but loopier than a tin of spaghetti hoops. The annelids enter 3D – all you need for stupid amounts of fun are three homicidal pals.

18 SSX 3




EA ■ NGC/87

Improves over its already-excellent predecessor in every area. A range of modes, ludicrous tricks and the mountain to end all videogame mountains will keep you busy all the way through the winter.

13 BURNOUT 2

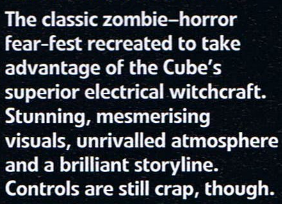



ACCLAIM ■ NGC/80

B2 takes the best bits of the first game – bum-clenching speed and bone-crunching collisions – and welds them onto more modes than you can eat. A brilliant series refinement.



19 RESIDENT EVIL

CAPCOM ■ NGC/72

The classic zombie–horror fear-fest recreated to take advantage of the Cube's superior electrical witchcraft. Stunning, mesmerising visuals, unrivalled atmosphere and a brilliant storyline. Controls are still crap, though.

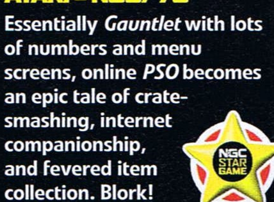


14 PHANTASY STAR ONLINE 90



ATARI ■ NGC/78

Essentially *Gauntlet* with lots of numbers and menu screens, online *PSO* becomes an epic tale of crate-smashing, internet companionship, and fevered item collection. Blork!



20 ETERNAL DARKNESS 89



NINTENDO ■ NGC/74

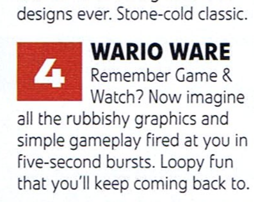
A rollicking Lovecraftian yarn of ancient evils, *Eternal Darkness* replaces slick zombie-slaying action with a wonderfully creepy story told through a cast of 12 playable characters and a truly innovative magic system.

TOP TEN GBA GAMES

1 ADVANCE WARS 1 & 2
Cute-looking turn-based strategy, with a frighteningly addictive, super-challenging core. Honestly, it's better than it sounds. *AW2* is essentially *Advance Wars 1.5*, but it's tweaked to perfection.

2 METROID FUSION
Everything that has ever made *Metroid* great can be found here. A sprawling environment littered with baddies and an imposing difficulty level. It has a great link-up feature with *Prime* too.

3 SUPER MARIO ADVANCE 2
This slightly tweaked version of the SNES classic boasts a massive game world and some of the tightest level designs ever. Stone-cold classic.



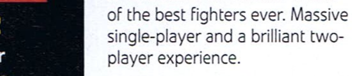
4 WARIO WARE
Remember Game & Watch? Now imagine all the rubbishy graphics and simple gameplay fired at you in five-second bursts. Loopy fun that you'll keep coming back to.



5 MARIO KART SUPER CIRCUIT
Nicks all the best bits from the SNES and N64 versions, and if you've got four friends, GBAs and link cables, they can play too.



6 POKÉMON RUBY & SAPPHIRE
The same structure as before – catch 'em all, send 'em in to battle – but it remains the most entertaining RPG out there…



7 STREET FIGHTER ALPHA 3
An incredible conversion of one of the best fighters ever. Massive single-player and a brilliant two-player experience.



8 MARIO & LUIGI SUPERSTAR SAGA
An RPG with puzzle and platform elements starring our two top plumbers – stuffed with laughs.



9 GRADIUS ADVANCE
The best shooter on GBA, and it's doubtful many will ever get close. Classic *Gradius* gameplay, with innovative levels and fantastic bosses.



10 TOP GEAR RALLY
Technically impressive #D racer – you can really feel the speed, despite the fact that it's on a handheld. It's got plenty of depth when you get into it.

NGC DIRECTORY

Your at-a-glance guide to everything else on GC...

HOW IT ALL WORKS

Title, score, publisher and where to find the review.

A brief outline of what to expect and whether you should consider it...



PONCE OF PERSIL 27

CLEANFUN ■ NGC/13

Mince-'em-up. A camp fella in a white suit has to rescue a pile of laundry from red wine, chocolate and 'man' stains.

18 WHEELER PRO AMERICAN TRUCKER 48

ACCLAIM ■ NGC/68

Drive your truck and avoid 'smokey'. Like *Out Run* with 'rigs', but the arcade version with the sit-in cabinet was better.

2002 FIFA WORLD CUP 30

EA ■ NGC/69

As much fun as being told your parents have been crushed to death in a horrific car crash and then contracting Weil's Disease.

ACE GOLF 74

EIDOS ■ NGC/74

A highly enjoyable, relaxing sticksie-ball game that treads a pleasant middle-ground between fun and serious.

AGGRESSIVE INLINE 81

ACTIVISION ■ NGC/72

Hawk's alterno-clone – you skate around massive arenas, 'busting' tricks on a pair of 'roller-boots'.

ATV QUAD POWER RACING 2 70

ACCLAIM ■ NGC/77

Wave Race on land with farming utility vehicles. Competent, but there's superior racing fare out there.

BALDUR'S GATE DARK ALLIANCE 80

VIVENDI ■ NGC/81

Dungeon-slashing adventurising with fewer numbers and a special two-player flavour. Actually quite good.

BARBARIAN 70

VIRGIN ■ NGC/72

A button-mashing fantasy battler complete with fully-smashable arenas. Fun, but not as good as *Smash Bros*.



BATMAN: DARK TOMORROW 15

KEMCO ■ NGC/81

For ages, Gamecube's most arse-clenchingly bad title. Clunky, dull, gameplay-free superheroics. Do not buy this game.

BATMAN: RISE OF SIN TZU 45

UBI SOFT ■ NGC/88

Repeated bashing that would've been great 15 years ago. It's okay, but only just. Batman deserves better.

BATMAN VENGEANCE 70

UBI SOFT ■ NGC/67

Cel-shaded platforming cartoon bat-action. One of the first Cube games that came out but it's looking pretty ropy already.

BEACH SPIKERS 79

ATARI ■ NGC/72

Volleyball on sand. Addictive with four players, but the single-player's longevity lets the side down.

BEYBLADE: SUPER TOURNAMENT BATTLE 10

ATARI ■ NGC/88

For £40, we'll come round and cheesegrater your eyeballs. It's more fun and lasts longer than this frickin' spinning top sim.

BIG AIR FREESTYLE 28

ATARI ■ NGC/75

Another awful off-road bike title, the kind that makes you want to cry the second you've started playing.

BIG MUTHA TRUCKERS 71

EMPIRE ■ NGC/83

A cross between *Elite* and Smokey and The Bandit, but with The Reynolds replaced by wall-eyed hillbillies.

BILLY HATCHER & THE GIANT EGG 86

SEGA ■ NGC/87

Rescue the Chicken Elders by rolling an egg around and smacking bad guys with it. Hatch it while you can!

TOP FIVE PLATFORM GAMES



SUPER MARIO SUNSHINE
A tour-de-force of everything good gaming should be.

LUIGI'S MANSION
Yes, it's a little easy to polish off, but you'll enjoy every second.

RAYMAN 3 HOODLUM HAVOC
Can't touch *Sunshine*, but it's entertaining and looks 'the bomb'.

WARIO WORLD
Not that tough to beat, admittedly, but still bags of fun.

SONIC MEGA COLLECTION
The best hedgehog games in existence on one tiny disc.

TOP FIVE RACING GAMES



MARIO KART: DOUBLE DASH!!
Single-player mode looks as cute as ever, but is rock hard.

F-ZERO GX
Expertly crafted arcade fun. Really rockets along.

WAVE RACE BLUE STORM
Classic Nintendo action with dazzling water effects.

BURNOUT 2
Fast car racing combined with steel-crunching crashes.

EXTREME G 3
The weapons are what make this future racer shine.

BIONICLE 29

EA ■ NGC/87

Diabionicle, more like. Tedious and fiddly with a duff camera and no incentive to keep playing. Stick to bricks, Lego.

BLOOD OMEN 2 LEGACY OF KAIN 72

EIDOS ■ NGC/77

Gamecube's other undead hack-fest. After 1,000 years of slumber, evil vampire Kain is awake and hungry.

BLOOD RAYNE 65

VIVENDI ■ NGC/79

Vampire fun. Dismember Nazis, fire an array of period weaponry, and battle an *evil priest* driving an *armoured pulpit*.

BLOODY ROAR: PRIMAL FURY 74

ACTIVISION ■ NGC/68

Competent morphing-into-animals fighting shenanigans, but *Capcom vs SNK* and *Mortal Kombat* have surpassed it.

BMX XXX 48

ACCLAIM ■ NGC/76

Childish, boring BMX game featuring pneumatically-enhanced strippers showing you their nipples. Get a girlfriend instead.

BOMBERMAN GENERATIONS 70

VIVENDI ■ NGC/76

Yet another update of the venerable arson franchise. Single-player is a little tedious; four-player is addictive as ever.

BUFFY THE VAMPIRE SLAYER CHAOS BLEEDS 70

VIVENDI ■ NGC/86

Somehow lacking in essential Buffiness, and not just because the Gellar girl didn't voice it. Good, but not great.

BURNOUT 86

ACCLAIM ■ NGC/67

With spectacular crashes and inch-perfect handling, *Burnout* is a dream of a game, even if it's over a bit quickly.

CAPCOM VS SNK 2 EO 79

CAPCOM ■ NGC/72

A great game, but purist retro freaks will want to fork out for a clunky arcade stick to get the most from it...

CASTLEWEEN 16

WANADOO ■ NGC/81

Unfairly difficult dismal platforming tedium with some kind of cartoony black magic schtick going on.

CEL DAMAGE 60

EA ■ NGC/66

Cel-shaded car-combat game in the vein of violent cartoons. Too manic and confusing for its own good.

CONFLICT DESERT STORM 89

SCI ■ NGC/80

Tense and teeth-gritting, with a great co-op mode. Brain-based fun for those nuclear winter evenings.

CRASH BANDICOOT THE WRATH OF CORTEX 40

VIVENDI ■ NGC/75

One of the worst ports we've seen – of a game that was a stinking load of crap to begin with! Avoid like death himself.

CRASH NITRO KART 53

VIVENDI ■ NGC/89

The basic graphics and cheaty CPU karters are bad enough, but the loading times are completely ridiculous. Buy *Mario Kart*.

CRAZY TAXI 70

ACCLAIM ■ NGC/67

Ancient title that's so old it's now been included as one of the minigames in *GTAIII*. Creaky graphics, but still good fun.

DIRECTORY

Every Gamecube game ever… rated!

DAKAR 2 — 79

ACCLAIM ■ NGC/80

Driving around in a vast expanse of dirt, all on your own, for days on end? *Dakar 2* manages to make this pretty good fun.

DARK SUMMIT — 51

THQ ■ NGC/69

SSX Tricky but with all the speed, style and entertainment removed with near-surgical precision. A waste of time.

DAVE MIRRA 2 FREESTYLE BMX — 75

ACCLAIM ■ NGC/67

Pornography-free, good, moto-cross game. Slick, with big arenas – but will only appeal to the BMX hardcore.

DIE HARD VENDETTA — 80

VIVENDI ■ NGC/74

Shoot holes in people who look like terrorists, so the US can enjoy one more night of guiltless slumber.

DEAD TO RIGHTS — 60

EA ■ NGC/83

What if Max Payne had an attack dog? Mindless ultraviolence. JACK SLATE is PISSED OFF and wants to HURT SOMEONE!

DEFENDER — 50

MIDWAY ■ NGC/79

Pointless 3D update that makes one of the hardest-core arcade classics really easy and, by extension, depressingly dull.

DEF JAM VENDETTA — 87

MAJESCO ■ NGC/82

Wrestling thumpfest featuring all your favourite hip-hop artistes from 'the block'. Bone-crunching moves and 'sick' beats.

DISNEY'S EXTREME SKATE ADVENTURE — 74

DISNEY ■ NGC/85

Neither extreme nor adventurous, but perfectly fine for people not up to *Tony Hawk's*, like your little brother or nan.

DISNEY'S MAGICAL MIRROR — 26

DISNEY ■ NGC/73

Cruel torture as The Mouse patronises his way through this hideous 'adventure'. Almost Beckettian in its non-eventfulness.

DISNEY SPORTS BASKETBALL — 55

KONAMI ■ NGC/82

Strip away the franchised exterior and it's another simple Sports title. Soon to follow: *Disney Sports Russian Roulette*.

DISNEY SPORTS FOOTBALL — 69

KONAMI ■ NGC/76

This isn't anywhere near as bad as you may think. It's an amusing, simple footie game for younger gamers.

DISNEY'S PARTY — 56

EA ■ NGC/86

Mickey and chums come up with a mildly entertaining party game – but would you pay £30 to be mildly entertained?

DISNEY SPORTS SKATEBOARDING — 64

KONAMI ■ NGC/80

The Mouse and his irritating friends have a crack at busting tricks on half-pipes. Walt must be spinning in his cryogenic pod.

DONALD DUCK GOIN' QUACKERS — 32

UBI SOFT ■ NGC/68

Like *Crash Bandicoot*, but with The Duck in charge, wearing a sailor suit and going bthackakackth. Also total rubbish.

DOSHIN THE GIANT — 62

NINTENDO ■ NGC/74

Quirky title that puts you in charge of a giant yellow man who must help/hinder indigenous islanders. A little short-lived.

TOP FIVE FIGHTING GAMES

SOUL CALIBUR 2
Gorgeous Link-fuelled beat-'em-up from fight kings Namco.

SUPER SMASH BROS MELEE
All your favourite Ninty types pounding each other's faces in.

VIEWTIFUL JOE
The only one-player beat-'em-up in our top five. Stunning.

DEF JAM VENDETTA
The wrestling game that appeals to non-grapple fans as well.

MK DEADLY ALLIANCE
"Mind if I remove your spleen?" "Ooh, go on – finish me."

TOP FIVE SHOOTING GAMES



METROID PRIME
Tough as nails shooting-heavy sci-fi adventure.

TIME-SPLITTERS 2
Pure class first-person shooting from the *GoldenEye* boys.

STAR WARS ROGUE LEADER
Looks great and lacks the ropy on-foot sections of the sequel.

XIII
Euro-shooter with comic-book looks and very serious violence.

IKARUGA
A pure arcade shooter that's tougher than most.

DRAGON BALL Z: BUDOKAI — 43

ATARI ■ NGC/87

Dated fighter where the characters move as though their feet have been dipped in concrete. Avoid even if you're a DBZ fan.

DRIVEN — 60

BAM ■ NGC/68

Very basic, very short game of the appaling film about driving fast in a large circle. Filling up bargain bins as we speak.

DR MUTO — 70

MIDWAY ■ NGC/79

Amusing mad-doctor platforming game where you have to mutate into different animals to solve puzzles.

DROME RACERS — 46

EA ■ NGC/85

Brings absolutely nothing new to racing, and doesn't manage to do the old stuff with any flair either.

EGGO MANIA — 49

KEMCO ■ NGC/72

Rubbish take on *Tetris* that, mystifyingly, involves ovulations. Wouldn't look out of place on an Amiga. Pointless in every way.

ENTER THE MATRIX — 73

ATARI ■ NGC/81

Take the red pill and find out how vaguely disappointing this movie tie-in is. We were expecting something really special.

ESPN INTERNATIONAL WINTER SPORTS 2002 — 37

KONAMI ■ NGC/67

Winter sports game combining tiresome button-mashing antics with equally dull timing and precision exercises. Dull.

EVOLUTION SKATEBOARDING — 78

KONAMI ■ NGC/79

Snazzy-looking *Hawk's* clone, but then, who wants an Elvis impersonator if the King's in town?

EVOLUTION SNOWBOARDING — 23

KONAMI ■ NGC/79

Fight bad guys while sliding down a mountain on a tray. Worse even than *Dark Summit*. Games like this should be made illegal.

EXTREME G3 — 85

ACCLAIM ■ NGC/67

An underrated gem, *XG 3* offers pulse-shattering speed, huge tracks, some ingenious weaponry and eye-sparkling visuals.

F1 2002 — 67

EA ■ NGC/71

Rock-hard racing your dad will enjoy. Also features humourless Hun driving robot Schumacher version 1.0.

F1 CAREER CHALLENGE — 81

EA ■ NGC/83

Packed representation of the glamorous world of F1 team management. You can take the cars for a spin too.

FIFA FOOTBALL 2003 — 83

EA ■ NGC/75

EA finally remember how good football games are made. Actually a bit better than *ISS 2*. A vast improvement.

FIFA FOOTBALL 2004 — 85

EA ■ NGC/87

It wasn't broken, but EA have fixed it anyway, slinging in more stats, new animations and a great Career mode.

FINDING NEMO — 65

THQ ■ NGC/86

Horrible loading times and stuttering graphics spoil what could have been enjoyable for rugrat gamers.

FREEDOM FIGHTERS — 83

IO ■ NGC/86

Blast invading Russian commies intent on taking over the US. Realistic? Not on your nelski. Fun? Oh da.

FIREBLADE — 59

MIDWAY ■ NGC/77

Brain-free 'copter game that'll appeal to military memorabilia-collecting psychos and fans of 80s Vietnam war films.

FROGGER BEYOND — 59

KONAMI ■ NGC/80

The trend for 'improving' ancient games by making them 3D taken to its most extreme conclusion.

GAUNTLET: DARK LEGACY — 25

MIDWAY ■ NGC/68

We'd be far more comfortable with this travesty if we'd had it inserted rectally. An insult to the memory of an arcade classic.

GLADIUS — 70

ACTIVISION ■ NGC/88

Persevere with the tutorials and odd glitches – there's a huge and rewarding strategy title buried under the shoddy graphics.

GODZILLA: DESTROY ALL MONSTERS MELEE — 68

ATARI ■ NGC/74

Stompy, building-smashing monster fun in multiplayer mode, but otherwise a little weak. Get *Smash Bros* instead.

HARRY POTTER AND THE CHAMBER OF SECRETS — 78

EA ■ NGC/75

Attractive and competent adaptation of Potter's film – but rather easy. Only die-hard wizard fans need apply.

HARRY POTTER AND THE PHILOSOPHER'S STONE — 70

EA ■ NGC/89

Originally out on PS2 before *CoS*, now out on Cube with graphics nabbed from *CoS*. At least the game's simple…

HARRY POTTER QUIDDITCH WORLD CUP — 62

EA ■ NGC/88

Potter fans will love the details from the books, but as a sports game, this broom-based title is one to sweep under the rug…

THE HOBBIT — 58

VIVENDI ■ NGC/88

Competent enough cutesy adventure but somehow not interesting, despite elves and dragons and dwarves, oh my.

HOT WHEELS VELOCITY X — 45

THQ ■ NGC/75

Basic racing/car-combat game based on plastic toys. Strictly for the very, very young. Or very stupid.

HULK — 65

VIVENDI ■ NGC/82

Get angry, turn green, and SMASH your way through puny soldiers. Also stealth sections with boring Bruce Banner.

IKARUGA — 85

ATARI ■ NGC/80

Classically old-style shooter – originally designed for robots, now available for human consumption. Very, very, *very* hard.

ISS 2 — 83

KONAMI ■ NGC/68

A winning formula mystifyingly tarnished with unnecessary 'improvements'. Good – but also a step backwards.

ISS 3 — 78

KONAMI ■ NGC/82

The once-invincible football series sinks ever lower with a misguided new 'close-up' mode.



DIRECTORY

Every Gamecube game ever… rated!

THE ITALIAN JOB: LA HEIST — 54
EIDOS ■ NGC/85
So short, even total games goobers can finish it. The lack of variety doesn't help. A mini driving game in every respect.

JAMES BOND 007 AGENT UNDER FIRE — 70
EA ■ NGC/70
Workaday gameplay dressed up in off-the-peg shooter upholstery, shooting baddies with ping-pong balls.

JAMES BOND 007: NIGHTFIRE — 72
EA ■ NGC/75
The best Bond game on Gamecube so far – done with flair – but the visuals can't hide an FPS that's lacking overall.

JEDI KNIGHT II — 67
ACTIVISION ■ NGC/75
A seriously disappointing PC conversion of an overrated shooter. Huge game, but quite tedious.

JEREMY MCGRATH SUPERCROSS WORLD — 20
ACCLAIM ■ NGC/69
Like a horrible nightmare about doing cross-country wearing nothing but steel-wool pants and barbed-wire flip-flops.

JIMMY NEUTRON BOY GENIUS — 18
THQ ■ NGC/78
Tedious, sorry, devoid-of-inspiration 'puzzle' game that actually manages to out-borify *Universal Studios*.

JIMMY NEUTRON JET FUSION — 71
THQ ■ NGC/89
Jimmy's second game is a big improvement. A simple platformer good for younger gamers.

JUDGE DREDD DREDD VS DEATH — 84
VIVENDI ■ NGC/89
An atmospheric, exciting shooter made even better by the presence of the Big Chin himself, Judge Dredd. Drokk!

KELLY SLATER'S PRO SURFER — 75
ACTIVISION ■ NGC/73
Same old trick-based extreme-sports, but this time in tubes made of water. Quite good fun, for a while.

KNOCKOUT KINGS 2003 — 79
EA ■ NGC/75
If the arcadey nature of *Rocky* doesn't sit that well with you, give this face-smashing simulator a go instead.

LEGENDS OF WRESTLING — 47
ACCLAIM ■ NGC/69
Bringing back old-skool 'rasslers' isn't enough to make this any good. A shambolic licensing cash-cow.

LEGENDS OF WRESTLING II — 50
ACCLAIM ■ NGC/76
Yet another travesty of a wrestling game, but made marginally better by the addition of Big Daddy.

THE LORD OF THE RINGS THE RETURN OF THE KING — 86
EA ■ NGC/87
More playable characters, including Gandalf, and less button-mashing permitted make an epic, very enjoyable sequel.

THE LORD OF THE RINGS THE TWO TOWERS — 68
EA ■ NGC/78
Repetitive hacking game with RPG overtones. Guide your man through levels making goblin prosciutto and orc sausages.

LOST KINGDOMS — 86
ACTIVISION ■ NGC/70
Collect, er, cards, and battle monsters with them in fantasy landscapes. The sequel does it better, though.

LOST KINGDOMS 2 — 87
ACTIVISION ■ NGC/81
Set 200 years after the events of the first game. It's a more satisfying experience, but it's still on the frothy side.

LUIGI'S MANSION — 88
NINTENDO ■ NGC/67
Luigi stars in this short, but still ace, fantastically playable combination of *Super Mario World* and *Ghostbusters*.

MADDEN NFL 2004 — 87
EA ■ NGC/85
Great stuff – a satisfying and accessible version of the sport for both newbies and experienced Yankee Egg Chasers.

MARIO PARTY 4 — 68
NINTENDO ■ NGC/75
Disappointing. Not bad if you're in the mood for party fun, but it's done little to improve on the originals.

MARIO PARTY 5 — 80
NINTENDO ■ NGC/89
A much better boardgame from Mazza, although the new Capsule system can slow things down a lot.

MAT HOFFMAN'S PRO BMX 2 — 70
ACTIVISION ■ NGC/75
A decent extreme sports sim. A bit slicker than *Dave Mirra*, but with smaller, tighter arenas. Does the job.

MEDAL OF HONOR FRONTLINE — 74
EA ■ NGC/75
FPS set during World War II. Looks ropy in places, but it's atmospheric and highly enjoyable.

MEDAL OF HONOR RISING SUN — 67
EA ■ NGC/88
Looks so old, it should come packaged with Werthers Originals, and both allies and enemies are a bit thick. Disappointing.

MEGA MAN NETWORK TRANSMISSION — 59
CAPCOM ■ NGC/84
Here's an idea: take a great GBA game, strip the good bits out and put the resulting platformer on GC. Yeah, that's *brilliant*.

MEN IN BLACK II ALIEN ESCAPE — 45
ATARI ■ NGC/78
Rubbish off-the-peg third-person shooting game of the rubbish off-the-peg movie sequel. Did we mention it was rubbish?

METAL ARMS GLITCH IN THE SYSTEM — 82
VIVENDI ■ NGC/88
Well-designed bottylicious shooter. It's big and it's extremely tough. And we all love robots with guns, eh?

MICRO MACHINES — 57
ATARI ■ NGC/78
Like the recipe for bread or wine gums, *Micro Machines* doesn't change much, and this iteration is no exception.

MINORITY REPORT — 39
ACTIVISION ■ NGC/77
Astonishingly brutal third-rate ass-whupping game that takes place on the sets of a Spielberg movie.

MORTAL KOMBAT DEADLY ALLIANCE — 80
MIDWAY ■ NGC/77
The best *Kombat* yet! The blood-soaked spine-ripping yarn finally gets the update it deserves on Gamecube. Finish him!

MX SUPERFLY — 63
THQ ■ NGC/73
Handles like you're driving space bikes on the surface of the moon. The best of a very bad bunch, though.

TOP FIVE ADVENTURE/ RPGS



ZELDA: THE WIND WAKER
Phenomenal. A reason to own Gamecube itself.

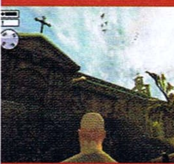
METROID PRIME
Tough as nails shooting-heavy sci-fi adventure. Again.

PHANTASY STAR ONLINE
A number-cruncher that turns epic with a bit of t'internet.

SKIES OF ARCADIA LEGENDS
If 'classic' RPGs are your bag, this boy'll be a sackful of joy.

LOST KINGDOMS II
Polished RPG with card collecting elements. Neat.

TOP FIVE ACTION ADVENTURES



HITMAN 2
Compelling assassin sim that kills the competition dead.

RESIDENT EVIL
A superior zombie-cruncher with slightly niggly controls.

ETERNAL DARKNESS
Another Nintendo exclusive that never fails to entertain.

SPLINTER CELL
Captivating stealth-laced adventure from the hand of Clancy.

RESIDENT EVIL 0
Not as good as those titles up there, but it's still dead good fun.

MYSTIC HEROES — 71
THQ ■ NGC/75
Simplistic 3D *Gauntlet*-style slasher that's somehow entertaining and charming. Well, Geraint thinks so.

NBA 2K3 — 85
ATARI ■ NGC/79
Puts all other basketball games to shame. Great gameplay complements an engrossing Career mode.

NBA COURTSIDE 2002 — 79
NINTENDO ■ NGC/68
The second-best basketball sim available, but it's still lacking. Strictly for hardcore fans of the Ball of B.

NBA LIVE 2003 — 70
EA ■ NGC/75
The yearly EA update. Solid gameplay; lots and lots of lovely numbers; otherwise not much different from last year.

NBA LIVE 2004 — 86
EA ■ NGC/88
After a good tweaking, this year's *NBA Live* has tighter controls and a vastly improved Dynasty mode. A tab soulless, mind.

NBA STREET VOL 2 — 88
EA ■ NGC/85
Almost negates the need for realistic sports sims – and all for half the price of real basketball trainers.

NEED FOR SPEED 2 HOT PURSUIT — 69
EA ■ NGC/74
Ironically slow racer. A lazy port has ruined what was originally a pretty entertaining franchise.

NEED FOR SPEED UNDERGROUND — 77
EA ■ NGC/88
Aargh! Aargh! I can't see… oh, hang on, that's the graphics. This street racer needs a bit more attention to detail, we feel.

NFL 2K3 — 86
ATARI ■ NGC/79
A meaty gridiron sim that could even threaten *Madden*. Management bits don't detract from the gameplay.

NHL 2003 — 64
EA ■ NGC/75
A realistic approach to ice hockey which isn't particularly fast or – more importantly – fun.

NHL 2004 — 57
EA ■ NGC/85
Behind-the-scenes additions don't compensate for the terrible frame rate on the ice. Play it at your peril.

NHL 2K3 — 72
ATARI ■ NGC/80
Complicated ice hockey title with stodgy gameplay. Similar to *NFL 2K3*, but doesn't quite pull it off.

NHL HITZ 20-02 — 79
MIDWAY ■ NGC/67
Exaggerated ice hockey title in a similar vein to *Red Card*, where the sticks aren't just for hitting the puck.

NHL HITZ 20-03 — 65
MIDWAY ■ NGC/74
Another year, another dose of frantic ice action. Not much cop on the original, mind.

PAC MAN WORLD 2 — 70
EA ■ NGC/78
The Pac is back for hilarious retro-themed platforming fun. Shamelessly pilfers everything from *Mario 64*.

PIKMIN 86
NINTENDO ■ NGC/80
Created using textures from Shigsy's own garden. A wonderful real-time strategy with multicoloured vegetable men.

P.N.03 77
CAPCOM ■ NGC/84
This super-stylish shooter with its dancing heroine is only marred by dull bosses and design.

PRO RALLY 2002 58
UBI SOFT ■ NGC/74
An okay game completely and ruthlessly dragged down by its thoroughly awful, frustrating handling.

PRO TENNIS WTA TOUR 48
KONAMI ■ NGC/74
The only tennis game on 'Cube so far, but with rubbish non-analogue controls and distinctly whiffy visuals.

RALLY CHAMPIONSHIP 74
SCI ■ NGC/78
Solid, does all the things a rallying game should. Should do the job until *McCrae* sees the light of day.

RAYMAN 3: HOODLUM HAVOC 84
UBI SOFT ■ NGC/78
The limbless French Freak™ has the last laugh with a game that, insists our correspondent, is actually good.

RED CARD 20-03 78
MIDWAY ■ NGC/71
Violent football game where you mince opponents with stud and fist until the meat shows.

RED FACTION 66
THQ ■ NGC/82
Shoot capitalist scum in the face, and maybe blow some holes in walls too, in this distinctly average brown fighting game.

REIGN OF FIRE 59
BAM ■ NGC/76
A poor game of a poor film, even if you do get to burn stuff. Nice ideas ruined by dodgy physics and controls.

RESIDENT EVIL ZERO 85
CAPCOM ■ NGC/78
Ditches the solo formula for a two-character system. Great set-pieces, looks lovely... more *Resi*, basically.

RESIDENT EVIL 2 62
CAPCOM ■ NGC/81
Experience the shambling, undead terror of original PSone graphics! Revisit Leon and Claire for just... £30!

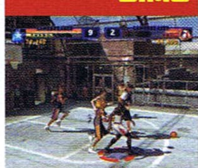
RESIDENT EVIL: NEMESIS 65
CAPCOM ■ NGC/81
Braaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiii nnnnnnnnnnnnnnnnnnnnnnnnsssssssssssssssssssssssssss! Etcetera.

ROBOTECH BATTLECRY 77
TDK ■ NGC/77
Stompy robots go to war in the game of the loony Japanese cartoon. Not bad, as far as stompy robot games go.

ROCKY 78
RAGE ■ NGC/74
A solid fighter where you guide Rockies one to five to greatness. Top two-player, loads of unlockable extras.

SCOOBY DOO NIGHT OF 100 FRIGHTS! 36
THQ ■ NGC/74
Platforming non-action that'll hold your interest for half an hour or until you need to go to the loo; whichever comes first.

TOP FIVE SPORTS SIMS



NBA STREET VOL 2
Not strictly a 'sim', but an off-the-wall b-ball title which puts more serious games to shame.

MADDEN NFL 2004
Forget soccer – sorry, 'sotcher' – Madden's still delivering the best pitch-based entertainment on Gamecube.

NBA LIVE 2004
EA's superb 'serious' basketball title.

FIFA 2004
The best FIFA yet.

TIGER WOODS PGA TOUR 2004
The final entry in our sports game listing is both a) another EA game and b) a golf game. It's ace though.



1080° AVALANCHE
More refined and robust than *SSX*.

SSX3
Fantastic sequel with plenty of challenge. More stunts than *1080°* – but not *quite* as polished a racer.

TONY HAWK'S PRO SKATER 3
Absorbing wheel-'em-up. *Tony Hawk's 4's* worth a look too.

AGGRESSIVE INLINE
Roller boot-based *Tony Hawk's* style action.

EVOLUTION SKATE-BOARDING
Another *Hawk's* clone that'solidly put together.

THE SCORPION KING 30
VIVENDI ■ NGC/75
Bad. Very bad. Guide a poor approximation of The Rock and hit bad guys over and over until they bleed from the eyeholes.

SEGA SOCCER SLAM 67
ATARI ■ NGC/74
A cartoonish footie game with an interest in violence. Cracking in multiplayer – poor on your own.

THE SIMPSONS: HIT & RUN 80
VIVENDI ■ NGC/87
The Simpsons take a tip from *GTA* and start driving recklessly and doling out the violence. And what's more, it works!

THE SIMPSONS: ROAD RAGE 52
EA ■ NGC/68
A really quite bad *Crazy Taxi* rip-off, with Simpsons characters bolted on, spewing repetitive 'funny' one-liners.

THE SIMS 81
EA ■ NGC/79
Highly addictive people simulating comes to the Cube. A great sense of humour and lots of potential for mischief.

THE SIMS BUSTIN' OUT 72
EA ■ NGC/89
What's outside the house? Hmm? No longer is your sim confined to his own four walls. Agoraphobics beware.

SMUGGLER'S RUN WARZONES 78
ROCKSTAR ■ NGC/73
Huge landscapes and fast-paced 'racing' in buggies is let down by repetitive gameplay and awful music.

SONIC ADVENTURE 2 BATTLE 70
ATARI ■ NGC/67
Sega's annoying mascot on Gamecube, now with an extra dimension added. Does anyone care any more?

SONIC ADVENTURE DX DIRECTOR'S CUT 38
ATARI ■ NGC/83
A GBA link-up feature for GC, but otherwise a straight port of a game that was rubbish to begin with.

SPEED KINGS 57
ACCLAIM ■ NGC/83
Wannabe *Burnout* with, strangely, lots of sliding under lorries involved. Otherwise bland and unnecessary.

SONIC MEGA COLLECTION 70
ATARI ■ NGC/79
If you have a retro craving, you could do worse: seven games on one disc, accurate down to the lo ding times!

SPIDER-MAN THE MOVIE 72
ACTIVISION ■ NGC/69
Dodgy control and camera are the only problems with this platform adventure. Voiced by the original cast.

SPY HUNTER 55
MIDWAY ■ NGC/68
Appaling frame-rate, nasty course design and linear racing make this one to avoid. A pointless remake.

SPYRO: ENTER THE DRAGONFLY 40
VIVENDI ■ NGC/75
Much like *Crash Bandicoot*, this is another shoddy port of a game that was never much fun in the first place.

SSX TRICKY 87
EA ■ NGC/69
Has PS2 written all over it, but is still excellent. Fast courses, shortcuts and secrets and mid-piste scrappage equal FUN.

STAR WARS BOUNTY HUNTER 68
ACTIVISION ■ NGC/77
The panting, pot-bellied, totally rubbish space-assassin gets the *Tomb Raider* treatment in this distinctly average game.

STAR WARS THE CLONE WARS 71
ACTIVISION ■ NGC/75
Enjoyable *Battlezone*-style tank blaster set around Episode II – not quite as good as *Rogue Leader*, but still fun all the same.

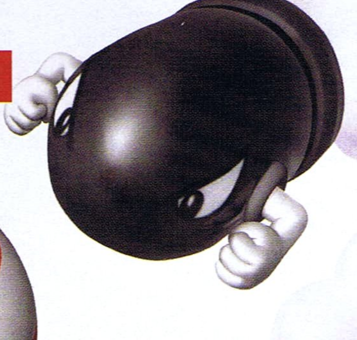
STAR WARS ROGUE LEADER 87
ACTIVISION ■ NGC/68
The most memorable – and certainly the best-looking – Star Wars game yet. The Battle of Hoth will melt your eyes.

STAR WARS: ROGUE SQUADRON 3: REBEL STRIKE 83
ACTIVISION ■ NGC/88
On-foot sections? Star Wars is about whizzing around in fighty spaceships, not saving some bint half-deaf from padded ears.

STARFOX ADVENTURES 72
NINTENDO ■ NGC/74
Adventure that's way too easy and linear. Not awful, but should have been far better. Hardly a fitting send-off for Rare.

SPLINTER CELL 89
UBI SOFT ■ NGC/81
Clanciverse stealth-fest with a gritty feel and the opportunity to operate various Clancy-approved hi-tech gizmos.

SPONGEBOB SQUAREPANTS THE BATTLE FOR BIKINI BOTTOM 32
THQ ■ NGC/89
The plot's weak and the levels are badly designed – and still the nauseating Spongebob doesn't look good by comparison.







DIRECTORY

Every Gamecube game ever… rated!

THE SUM OF ALL FEARS 25
UBI SOFT ■ NGC/76
One of the most technically inept games we've played. Clancy says bury the copies in the desert before anyone notices.

SUMMONER A GODDESS REBORN 68
THQ ■ NGC/79
Much levelling-up and numbers floating out of people's heads. Crappy visuals, but an engrossing adventure.

SUPER BUBBLE POP 65
JALECO ■ NGC/78
Kind of *Tetris*-y flavoured *Bust-a-Move* for the Sunny Delight generation, with chemically-induced visuals and music. Wick.

SUPER BUST-A-MOVE ALL STARS 70
UBI SOFT ■ NGC/89
It's *Bust-A-Move*! On your Gamecube! Puzzle fans rejoice – but only buy it if you haven't got a version already.

SUPERMAN: SHADOW OF APOKOLIPS 60
ATARI ■ NGC/81
Supes redeems himself somewhat with this stylised and, most importantly, maze-free effort based on the animated cartoons.

SUPER MONKEY BALL 88
ATARI ■ NGC/67
Ingenious simian-flavoured update of *Marble Madness*. One of the weirdest, most wonderful Gamecube games out there.

SUPER MONKEY BALL 2 82
ATARI ■ NGC/78
The apes are back with levels even harder of core, and a mental new story mode involving love, betrayal and banana-theft.

SX SUPERSTAR 71
ACCLAIM ■ NGC/83
Unassuming motocross scrambling, enhanced with a *Def Jam*-style Career mode than involves girlfriend upgrades.

TARZAN FREERIDE 59
UBI SOFT ■ NGC/67
Disney. Platformer. Need we say any more? Workaday, jungle-based gameplay with the Seventh Earl of Greystoke.

TAZ WANTED 52
ATARI ■ NGC/72
Some of the worst level design we've ever seen in this middling, frustrating cel-shaded *Mario*-wannabe platformer.

TETRIS WORLDS 38
THQ ■ NGC/73
THQ ruin one of the Best Games Ever by trying to make it 'better'. Will anyone stop these people before it's too late?

TIGER WOODS PGA TOUR 2003 82
EA ■ NGC/75
The world most efficient golf robot gets his own game. Actually really good, in a surprisingly arcadey way. Nice graphics, too.

TIGER WOODS PGA TOUR 2004 84
EA ■ NGC/86
Ginormous plus humungous multiplied by golf. Apart from that and a few tweaks for stattoes, it's the same as the last one.

TOM CLANCY'S GHOST RECON 66
UBI SOFT ■ NGC/79
Clancy has yet another go at squad-based tactical ops, and this time things run a little bit more smoothly. Entertaining stuff.

TONY HAWK'S PRO SKATER 3 87
ACTIVISION NGC/67
Mental grinds and stunts backed up by a mountain of extras and vast skate parks – if you haven't tried *Hawk's*, do it now.

TONY HAWK'S PRO SKATER 4 85
ACTIVISION ■ NGC/75
No time limits and some great RPG elements and minigames complement the larger areas in *TH4* – a well-tweaked fourquel.

TONY HAWK'S UNDERGROUND 79
ACTIVISION ■ NGC/88
For a series that's been running so long, the latest Hawk's lacks visual polish but the Story mode's been massively improved.

TOP ANGLER 35
XICAT ■ NGC/81
Generic fishing game, predictably involving bass, that doesn't even get the basics of its limited genre right. Tiresome.

TOP GUN: COMBAT ZONES 71
VIRGIN ■ NGC/72
Wingman-being movie-based flyboy antics. GC's only flight 'sim' – pretty challenging, but we recommend you try it first.

TY THE TASMANIAN TIGER 60
EA ■ NGC/76
An average platformer with an Antipodean twist. It's a solid example of the genre but nothing more or less.

TUROK EVOLUTION 71
ACCLAIM ■ NGC/73
Relatively disappointing dino-hunting FPS sequel. Not as bad as *Turok 3* on N64, but serious niggles let the series down badly.

TRUE CRIME: STREETS OF LA 75
ACTIVISION ■ NGC/88
Looks great, but some of the gameplay's fiddlier than a violinists' convention. As close as you'll get to *GTA* on 'Cube.

UFC THROWDOWN 51
UBI SOFT ■ NGC/73
Highly amusing freestyle thump-fest, where you lead your oily, grunting man to victory in some Greek-style athletic contest.

PAUL'S SENSE QUOTES

PRIVACY
No matter which way you look at it, there's no privacy in silence. Particularly if you're sitting on the lav…

DREAMS
Never, repeat, NEVER realize a dream you've had for a long time. It'll only disappoint you when it's not as great as you'd imagined.

RELATIONS
I saw on the net the other day how I could become my own grandad. Imagine that? I could entertain myself all day long about the war and how things are so much more expensive now.

WEATHER
If there's one thing these days you can't rely on, it's the weather… or for England to win at any sport we invented. Although there was the Rugby World Cup, wasn't there?.. Still, at least it's not raining… bugger!

Do you have more 'sense' than our Sense Master Paul Edwards? Probably! He wants your Sense Talks, mate! Send them to him at paul.edwards@futurenet.co.uk or to Sense Talk at the usual address.

UNIVERSAL STUDIOS 24
KEMCO ■ NGC/67
Anyone who makes a game that has you picking up rubbish should be shot, stuffed into a suitcase and hurled into the sea.

V-RALLY 3 68
ATARI ■ NGC/82
Speedy rallying game that wouldn't be so much of a drag if they'd concentrated on the basics first. Like, er, the steering.

VIRTUA STRIKER 3 V2002 55
ATARI ■ NGC/69
Nice to look at, horrible to play. Rubbish AI and unwieldy controls make for a bobbins game of footie.

WALLACE & GROMIT IN PROJECT ZOO 70
ACCLAIM ■ NGC/87
Recreates the plasticene duo's flexible world brilliantly. Only a few fiddly sections let this youngsters' platformer down.

WARIO WORLD 86
NINTENDO ■ NGC/83
The purple-nosed anti-Mario gets his own game. A funtastic, surreal frenzy of lowbrow humour and monster-hitting. Waah!

WORMS BLAST 63
UBI SOFT ■ NGC/74
Annelids go to war (again). Kinda like *Bust-a-Move* in a puzzly-action kind of way, except this isn't anywhere near as good.

WRECKLESS THE YAKUZA MISSIONS 51
ACTIVISION ■ NGC/75
Drive around like a lunatic and smash up cars and anything else that gets in your way. Sub-*Burnout* road-accident nonsense.

WWE CRUSH HOUR 43
THQ ■ NGC/83
Those magnificent greasy men drive magnificent greasy fighting machines for some unlikely *Vigilante 8*-style 'thrills'.

WWE WRESTLEMANIA X8 70
ACTIVISION ■ NGC/72
Okay wrestler, but with nothing particularly new and a way-too-familiar engine. But if you insist on buying these things…

WWE WRESTLEMANIA XIX 68
ACTIVISION ■ NGC/85
Clumsy interface, limited CAW parts and irritating Story mode. Still, it'll sell by the shedload, no matter what its flaws are.

XGRA 71
ACCLAIM ■ NGC/89
Not-too-bad future racer, hampered by the fact that it's come out at nearly the same time as the superior *F-Zero GX*.

XIII 86
UBI SOFT ■ NGC/88
A flawed gem of a shooter. Rock-hard in places, with wonderful set pieces and brilliant comic-book-style graphics.

X-MEN: NEXT DIMENSION 55
ACTIVISION ■ NGC/75
Duller than dishwater. Fighting-by-numbers stuff that offers very little of interest. Total waste of a pretty cool licence, too.

X-MEN 2 WOLVERINE'S REVENGE 64
ACTIVISION ■ NGC/82
Is he a man? Is he a wolf? Is he a genetically engineered super-soldier with hillbilly hair? Fighting with the clawed X-Man.

ZOOCUBE 50
ACCLAIM ■ NGC/71
Puzzle game involving a rotating mouth that sucks animal genitals and goes 'moo', 'oink', 'roar', 'quack' and 'wah!'

EXPERT TIPS, TOUGH CHALLENGES, TRIVIA AND MORE

NGC EXTENDED PLAY

DON'T MISS...



Top tips for *Mario Kart* – with the four best time trial courses fully mapped! P86

CONTENTS

A concise guide to the informative guts within…

△ MUSHROOM KINGDOM KART CHAMPIONSHIP: Things are getting faster on the track – are you in the lead?

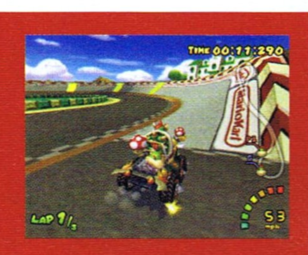
△ MAILBOX: For boys? For girls? Or are some games suitable for everyone? The debate rages on…



Become the world's best time-trialler in…

MARIO KART DOUBLE DASH





WHAT'S IT ALL ABOUT?

As with all *Mario Karts*, *Double Dash* offers a horribly addictive Time Trial mode. The potential for improving your driving style and circuit times is almost infinite – especially once you've unlocked the staff ghosts that are hidden on every course. Beating them is no mean feat, but doing so marks you out as a *Mario Kart* master. Here, then, are our tips for doing so on four of our favourite tracks as well as some hints that should help you get the most out of your racing. We've shown you the perfect racing line to take and the blue flashes indicate where you should your Secret Corner Turbo. Enjoy!



WHAT WE SAID IN ISSUE 88!

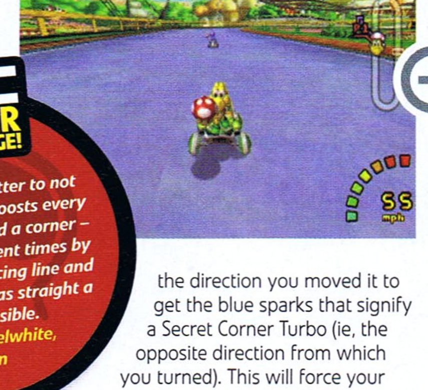
The best game of its type, sweeping all of those countless weak copycats into the dustbin with one expertly timed powerslide. There's still nobody else out there fit to drive in Mario's slipstream.













1. TURBO START!

Yeah, it's in the instruction booklet, we know, but there's some extra info we can give. Watch Lakitu's hands – it gives you an easier indicator for when to accelerate (as soon as he's dropped it for the fourth time, as the lights go green). There are variations of turbo start – to get the best, biggest boost you need to press A exactly as the lights go green. If that's too complex, simply hammering A during the countdown often works too…

2. SECRET CORNER TURBO

Unlike *Mario Kart 64*, this little trick is made clear in the instructions too (where it's called the mini-turbo. Not as good as our longtime name, we think). But they don't tell you this: you don't need to move the analogue stick all the way opposite when waggling it. Centering it is enough, so you can quickly 'flick' it from centre to side to pull off speedy boosts.

3. BOOSTING ON STRAIGHTS

An *essential* skill for the serious time-trialler, and easy to pull off once you know how to do it – it needn't be reserved solely for corners. As you boost, keep your analogue stick pressed in the direction you moved it to get the blue sparks that signify a Secret Corner Turbo (ie, the opposite direction from which you turned). This will force your kart into an almost-straight line and stop you going in the direction you originally turned.

4-5. GHOSTS

You can obviously save ghosts of your best times to races against. But contained within each course are Nintendo's own staff ghosts. You'll need to break a certain time to activate them and then do *much* better than that to actually beat them… here they are:

Track	Beat	Staff time
Luigi Circuit	1:29:00	1:26:277
Peach Beach	1:23:00	1:20:404
Baby Park	1:14:00	1:11:108
Dry Dry Desert	1:53: 00	1:50:755
Mushroom Bridge	1:34:00	1:31:458
Mario Circuit	1:44: 00	1:41: 384
Daisy Cruiser	1:55:00	1:52: 207
Waluigi Stadium	2:02:00	1:59:658
Sherbet Land	1:28:00	1:25:904
Mushroom City	1:53:00	1:50:663
Yoshi Circuit	2:02:00	1:59:886
DK Mountain	2:15:00	2:12:639
Wario Colosseum	2:24:00	2:21:106
Dino Dino Jungle	2:03: 00	2:00:908
Bowser's Castle	2:47:00	2:44:690
Rainbow Road	3:19:00	3:16:476

Once you've opened a ghost up, if you switch the game off you'll then have to beat the required time to get him or her to appear again – they don't stay 'open', unfortunately.

Once you've opened a ghost up, always watch their performance as they offer invaluable tips as to when to boost (see how many times they boost on straights, for example) and, most importantly, watch where they use their mushrooms and what corner-cutting they do. Odds are that this is the best route through the course, but there are always ways to do things better than they do…

6-7. KARTS

Having played the game to death over the last month or two, you'll by now have your own favourite kart, but it won't necessarily be the best kart for time trialling with. In general we've avoided the medium karts (they're too average) and gone for either the heavy karts, which get better boosts and succeed on courses with long straights due to their high top speed, or the light karts, whose improved handling and ability to go off-road with less



performance impact than the other vehicles are dead handy. **NGC**'s vehicle of choice is the Barrel Train – well, we all use it apart from Martin, who thinks it looks rubbish, which is ironic as he likes to use Donkey Kong's ridiculous wooden-wheeled jalopy. What's your fave?

8-10. SHORTCUTS

There are many obvious shortcuts on many of the courses – the between-buildings pathway on Mushroom City and the tunnel on Yoshi Circuit, for instance. However, it appears that Nintendo have taken every effort to eradicate the 'glitchy' shortcuts that made *Mario Kart 64* such a joy to exploit – we've yet to find anything of the calibre of the famed Mario Raceway Wall Hop. There a couple of places where we think you can be sneaky – DK Mountain, for example. As you powerslide 'round the corner leading to the crevasse, boost then powerslide to the right. Your rear end should hit the wall and you can then boost forward over the crevasse. It's dead tricky, mind. And what about the first shortcut on Yoshi Circuit, where you boost over the gap? Has anyone been able to do that with a corner turbo rather than a mushroom? We want to know. In fact, we want to know of any shortcuts you've found or exploited. Send details of anything you've uncovered to 'Shortkarts' at the usual address (or email us at ngc@futurenet.co.uk with 'Shortkarts' in the subject line) and, if they're good enough, we'll print them in a shortcuts special feature in the magazine and the best will get a prize. Get hunting!

NGC READER KNOWLEDGE!

Each star on a kart's speed characteristic stands for roughly 1mph. This means that on 150cc the top speeds for the karts range from 54mph (one star) to 58mph (five stars).
Darren Penk, Kelvedon

IT'S YOUR TURN!

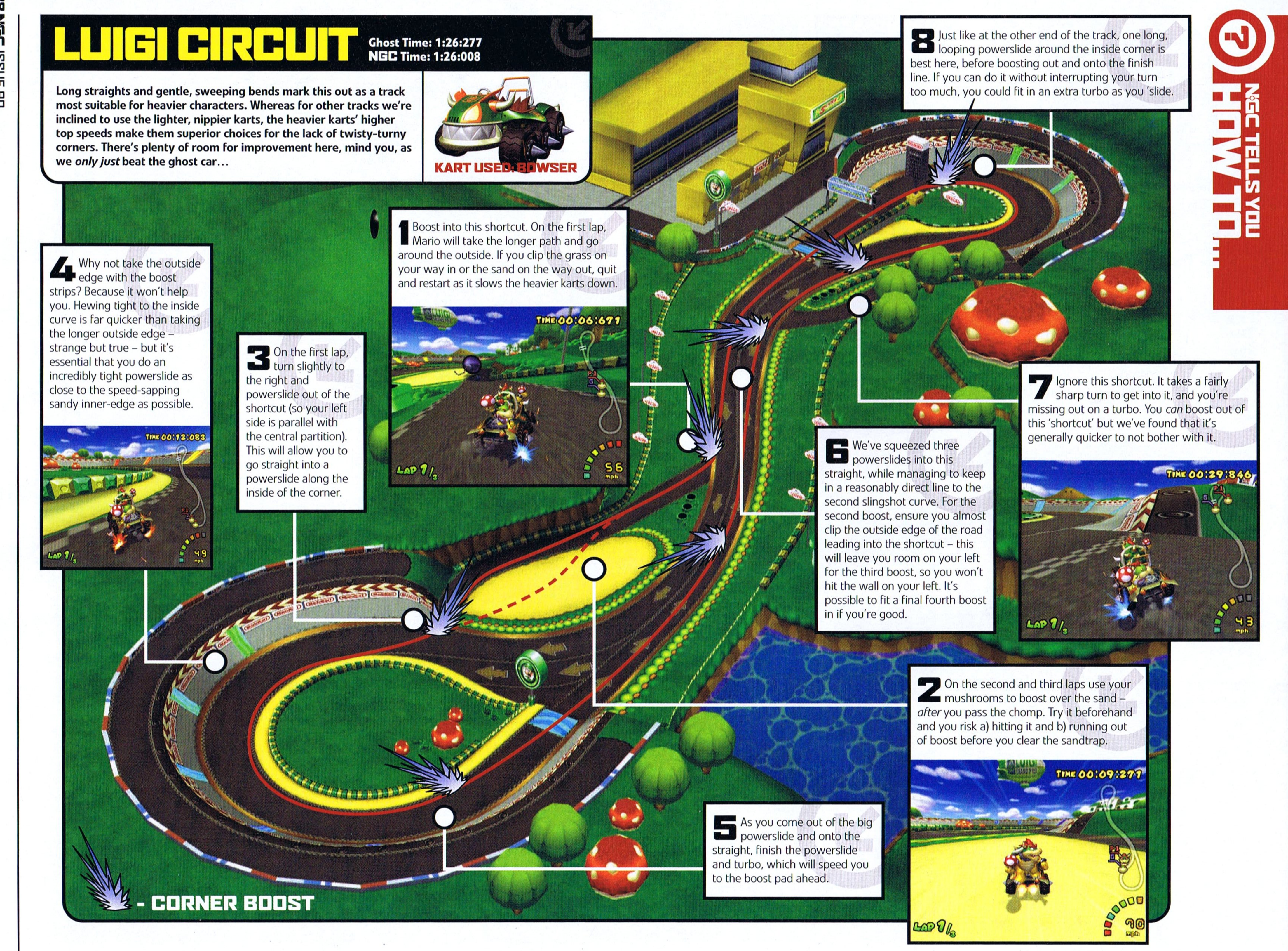
Obviously we're running the Mushroom Kingdom Kart Championship leagues with all your best Time Trial times, but we want to see more than that. Over the next four pages you'll find detailed tips on four of our favourite courses. But can you do better? Do you have different, more effective routes? Have you thrashed our times to oblivion? Can you put together a guide to getting a cracking time trial result on a course we haven't covered? Then we want you to write in and tell us all about it, and we'll do an NGC readers' time trial tips feature with prizes for the best. Send in your tips and course guides to 'Time Trial Tips' at the usual address (or, again, email us at ngc@futurenet.co.uk with 'Time Trial Tips' as the subject).

LUIGI CIRCUIT

Ghost Time: 1:26:277
NGC Time: 1:26:008

Long straights and gentle, sweeping bends mark this out as a track most suitable for heavier characters. Whereas for other tracks we're inclined to use the lighter, nippier karts, the heavier karts' higher top speeds make them superior choices for the lack of twisty-turny corners. There's plenty of room for improvement here, mind you, as we *only just* beat the ghost car…

KART USED: BOWSER



1 Boost into this shortcut. On the first lap, Mario will take the longer path and go around the outside. If you clip the grass on your way in or the sand on the way out, quit and restart as it slows the heavier karts down.

2 On the second and third laps use your mushrooms to boost over the sand – *after* you pass the chomp. Try it beforehand and you risk a) hitting it and b) running out of boost before you clear the sandtrap.

3 On the first lap, turn slightly to the right and powerslide out of the shortcut (so your left side is parallel with the central partition). This will allow you to go straight into a powerslide along the inside of the corner.

4 Why not take the outside edge with the boost strips? Because it won't help you. Hewing tight to the inside curve is far quicker than taking the longer outside edge – strange but true – but it's essential that you do an incredibly tight powerslide as close to the speed-sapping sandy inner-edge as possible.

5 As you come out of the big powerslide and onto the straight, finish the powerslide and turbo, which will speed you to the boost pad ahead.

6 We've squeezed three powerslides into this straight, while managing to keep in a reasonably direct line to the second slingshot curve. For the second boost, ensure you almost clip the outside edge of the road leading into the shortcut – this will leave you room on your left for the third boost, so you won't hit the wall on your left. It's possible to fit a final fourth boost in if you're good.

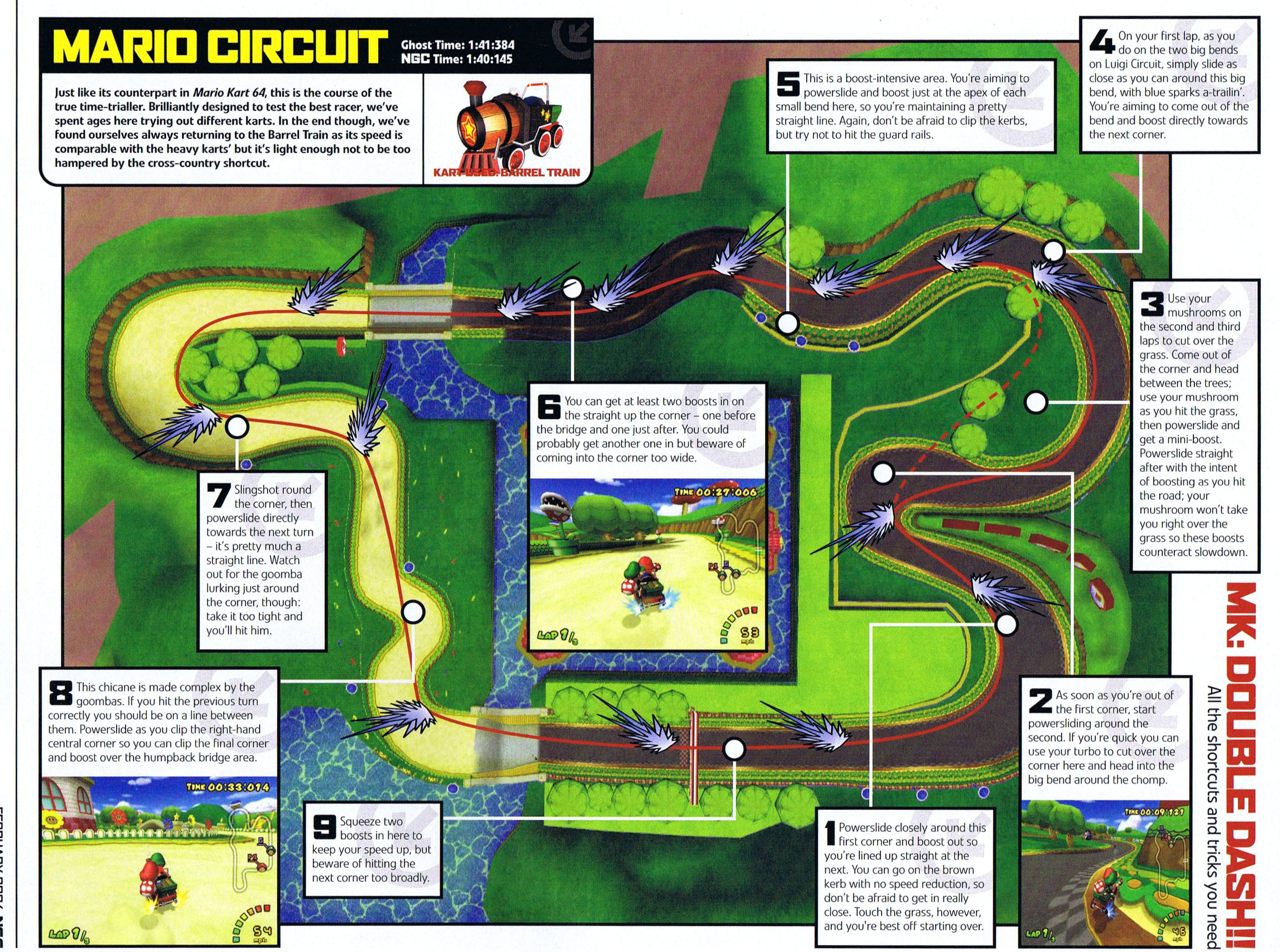
7 Ignore this shortcut. It takes a fairly sharp turn to get into it, and you're missing out on a turbo. You *can* boost out of this 'shortcut' but we've found that it's generally quicker to not bother with it.

8 Just like at the other end of the track, one long, looping powerslide around the inside corner is best here, before boosting out and onto the finish line. If you can do it without interrupting your turn too much, you could fit in an extra turbo as you 'slide.

MARIO CIRCUIT

Ghost Time: 1:41:384
NGC Time: 1:40:145

Just like its counterpart in *Mario Kart 64*, this is the course of the true time-trialler. Brilliantly designed to test the best racer, we've spent ages here trying out different karts. In the end though, we've found ourselves always returning to the Barrel Train as its speed is comparable with the heavy karts' but it's light enough not to be too hampered by the cross-country shortcut.



1 Powerslide closely around this first corner and boost out so you're lined up straight at the next. You can go on the brown kerb with no speed reduction, so don't be afraid to get in really close. Touch the grass, however, and you're best off starting over.

2 As soon as you're out of the first corner, start powersliding around the second. If you're quick you can use your turbo to cut over the corner here and head into the big bend around the chomp.

3 Use your mushrooms on the second and third laps to cut over the grass. Come out of the corner and head between the trees; use your mushroom as you hit the grass, then powerslide and get a mini-boost. Powerslide straight after with the intent of boosting as you hit the road; your mushroom won't take you right over the grass so these boosts counteract slowdown.

4 On your first lap, as you do on the two big bends on Luigi Circuit, simply slide as close as you can around this big bend, with blue sparks a-trailin'. You're aiming to come out of the bend and boost directly towards the next corner.

5 This is a boost-intensive area. You're aiming to powerslide and boost just at the apex of each small bend here, so you're maintaining a pretty straight line. Again, don't be afraid to clip the kerbs, but try not to hit the guard rails.

6 You can get at least two boosts in on the straight up the corner – one before the bridge and one just after. You could probably get another one in but beware of coming into the corner too wide.

7 Slingshot round the corner, then powerslide directly towards the next turn – it's pretty much a straight line. Watch out for the goomba lurking just around the corner, though: take it too tight and you'll hit him.

8 This chicane is made complex by the goombas. If you hit the previous turn correctly you should be on a line between them. Powerslide as you clip the right-hand central corner so you can clip the final corner and boost over the humpback bridge area.

9 Squeeze two boosts in here to keep your speed up, but beware of hitting the next corner too broadly.

YOSHI CIRCUIT

Ghost time:1:59:886
NGC Time: 1:57:686

This is possibly even better than Mario Circuit for time trialling. Who'd have thought that a giant outline of a dinosaur would be such an effective racetrack? There are two shortcuts present (we only use one of 'em for time trialling) and we've again used the Barrel Train as it's possible to keep near top speed all the way, and it's a good car for powersliding – not too heavy, not too light.

KART USED: BARREL TRAIN



1 From exiting the first corner to this corner is almost a straight line, if you're exact with your sliding-and-boosting. Beware of taking the corner too closely, though, as it's easy to drop into the sea.

2 Use your mushrooms on this shortcut – we used 'em on the first two laps, whereas the ghost uses his on the final two. We found it handy to get ahead as soon as we could, otherwise you run the risk of Yoshi initially outrunning you – a psychological punch-in-the-face. Even after boosting out of the second corner you can squeeze another boost in before you use your mushroom.

3 You'll have to go around this corner for one lap as you've only got two mushrooms. It's possible to force out a couple of boosts if you keep close to the inside edge and on-course, otherwise you'll come out onto the short straight too close, requiring you to turn more.

4 This large bend allows you to pop a couple of boosts off as you powerslide. However, when exiting you want to make sure you've got yourself as straight a line as possible from the inside corner to the outside corner (just above Yoshi's eye). This is why we haven't bothered boosting as we exit the, er, 'nose'.

5 You can boost off the side here and into a tunnel. Don't use this shortcut, save your mushrooms for the earlier one. It barely saves any time and is best considered as a multiplayer ploy – when you're playing in Versus mode it contains double power-ups.

6 Boosting from Yoshi's first back plate allows you to head in an almost straight line through this chicane. If you're not careful you can come out of the corner too wide and hit the grass. So take the corner tight and boost on the road.

7 Don't slow down for this. It looks tight, but start your powerslide as you come around the bend before it and you can slingshot neatly around it, before boosting straight forward.

8 Like the second corner on Mario Circuit, you can boost over this corner if you've timed your turn right. This should line you up reaaal nice for the final couple of corners.

WALUIGI STADIUM

Ghost Time: 1:59:658
NGC Time: 1:58:871

A favourite in the NGC office, Waluigi Stadium's corner-festooned dirt track is a time trial treat and a descendant of *Mario Kart 64's* Wario Stadium (minus, of course, any glitchy shortcuts). We use the Bullet Racer for this as it's lighter than the Barrel Train and this is a bumpy track. If you ever land on the top or incline of a bump, start again. Aim to land on the downhill side or to clear them altogether.

KART USED: BULLET RACER

1 You can't turn in the air in *Double Dash*, but turning just before you jump is a lifesaver. On this first bump yank the joystick to the right before you take off – you should be perfectly placed to slingshot around the corner when you land. Nicely.

2 Don't try to repeat the turn-before-you-jump trick here, though, as the odds are you'll hit the ring of fire encircling the jump. However, if you hold down R before you land you'll go into a powerslide when you hit the track. There's a reason why they took the hop out of *Double Dash* and it's this: if it was still in you wouldn't be able to do things like this. See, Nintendo *do* know what they're doing.

3 You'll be tempted like Adam to use your mushrooms at this point – don't, save them for later on. By the time you land from the jump you might as well skirt the edges of the puddle and boost off down the straight.

4 Boost along the straight, veering to avoid the piranha plants and fire rings. Use your final boost when you've powerslid onto the straight.

5 Turn before you jump – as you come out of the corner use a mushroom and you'll zoom over the mud. Powerslide as you hit the track so you can corner tightly and hit the jump. One of your laps will be 'shroom-less. If you don't navigate the chicane perfectly, boost off the muddy area.

6 It's worth squeezing in a boost as you touch down here to give yourself a little extra speed as you come back around the first corner. Don't worry about doing it on your final lap as, given the nearness of the finish line, you won't really get any benefit from it.

ENTER TODAY! Prove your *Mario Kart* skills by sending us your Time Trial times for the first four cups. Below are the current leaderboards. We **need video evidence of your Time Trial records as proof** (see p103 for how to do this). We'll run the Championship until issue 92. At the end, all the individual course winners will be rewarded, with the overall winner (the person occupying most first places) receiving the Championship Cup.

WE SET YOU THE CHALLENGE – NOW WE'RE RAISING THE STAKES. HAVE YOU GOT THE SKILLZ TO TAKE ON THE GANG?

MUSHROOM KINGDOM KART CHAMPIONSHIP

THE LEADERBOARD

MONTH 2: PICKING UP THE PACE



MUSHROOM CUP

LUIGI CIRCUIT

1 **Bart Savelkouls** Netherlands	1:19:500
2 **John Potter** Essex	1:23:947
3 **Matt Dyson** Southampton	1:24:065
4 **Dave Every** Ellesmere Port	1:24:293
5 **Jamie Stirzaker** Kirkham	1:24:672
6 **Andrew Mills** Dundee	1:24:775
7 **Jamie Nixon** Glasgow	1:25:450
8 **Ryan Wilkinson** Oxford	1:28:735
9 **Neil Gage** Co Antrim	1:29:182
10 **Toby Everill** Oxford	1:29:831

PEACH BEACH

1 **Bart Savelkouls** Netherlands	1:11:797
2 **Dave Every** Ellesmere Port	1:15:488
3 **Andrew Mills** Dundee	1:17:523
4 **John Potter** Essex	1:17:654
5 **Jamie Stirzaker** Kirkham	1:17:837
6 **Jamie Nixon** Glasgow	1:19:301
7 **Matt Dyson** Southampton	1:20:185
8 **David Holliss** Romford	1:21:952
9 **Neil Gage** Co Antrim	1:22:506
10 **Allen Gage** Co Antrim	1:23:092

BABY PARK

1 **Bart Savelkouls** Netherlands	1:07:688
2 **Jim Fadden** Horsham	1:08:656
3 **John Potter** Essex	1:09:604
4 **Dave Every** Ellesmere Port	1:10:714
5 **Andrew Mills** Dundee	1:10:236
6 **Jamie Stirzaker** Kirkham	1:10:608
7 **Darren Bolton** No fixed abode	1:10:655
8 **Jamie Nixon** Glasgow	1:11:150
9 **Matt Dyson** Southampton	1:11:774
10 **Neil Gage** Co Antrim	1:14:236

DRY DRY DESERT

1 **Bart Savelkouls** Netherlands	1:37:265
2 **Dave Every** Ellesmere Port	1:49:241
3 **John Potter** Essex	1:49:763
4 **Jamie Stirzaker** Kirkham	1:51:079
5 **Jamie Nixon** Glasgow	1:53:593
6 **Andrew Mills** Dundee	1:55:052
7 **Allen Gage** Co Antrim	1:58:104
8 **Toby Everill** Oxford	2:04:898
9 **Ryan Wilkinson** Oxford	2:07:422
10 **Paul Blunt** Nottingham	2:09:145

FLOWER CUP

MUSHROOM BRIDGE

1 **Bart Savelkouls** Netherlands	1:23:832
2 **Jamie Stirzaker** Kirkham	1:29:544
3 **Andrew Mills** Dundee	1:29:966
4 **Dave Every** Ellesmere Port	1:30:643
5 **David Holliss** Romford	1:33:410
6 **Jamie Nixon** Glasgow	1:34:450
7 **Jim Fadden** Horsham	1:34:879
8 **Neil Gage** Co Antrim	1:35:490
9 **Allen Gage** Co Antrim	1:36:279
10 **Ryan Wilkinson** Oxford	1:36:450

MARIO CIRCUIT

1 **John Potter** Essex	1:31:321
2 **Bart Savelkouls** Netherlands	1:31:570
3 **Jamie Stirzaker** Kirkham	1:38:404
4 **Dave Every** Ellesmere Port	1:38:923
5 **Darren Bolton** No fixed abode	1:41:296
6 **Andrew Mills** Dundee	1:42:205
7 **Jamie Nixon** Glasgow	1:43:633
8 **Allen Gage** Co Antrim	1:48:060
9 **Toby Everill** Oxford	1:50:584
10 **Chris Nicholls** Sheffield	1:54:100

DAISY CRUISER

1 **Bart Savelkouls** Netherlands	1:43:944
2 **Jamie Stirzaker** Kirkham	1:50:908
3= **John Potter** Essex	1:51:992
3= **Dave Every** Ellesmere Port	1:51:992
5 **Jamie Nixon** Glasgow	1:55:504
6 **Andrew Mills** Dundee	1:59:590
7 **Allen Gage** Co Antrim	2:00:899
8 **Toby Everill** Oxford	2:11:426
9 **Ryan Wilkinson** Oxford	2:12:874
10 **Geraint Evans** NGC	2:14:080

WALUIGI STADIUM

1 **Bart Savelkouls** Netherlands	1:46:035
2 **Dave Every** Ellesmere Port	1:52:922
3 **Jamie Stirzaker** Kirkham	1:57:058
4 **Andrew Mills** Dundee	1:57:105
5 **Jim Fadden** Horsham	1:57:429
6 **John Potter** Essex	1:59:290
7 **Jamie Nixon** Glasgow	2:00:818
8 **Toby Everill** Oxford	2:04:926
9 **Allen Gage** Co Antrim	2:05:575
10 **Ryan Wilkinson** Oxford	2:07:295

STAR CUP

SHERBERT LAND

1 **Bart Savelkouls** Netherlands	1:19:285
2 **Jamie Stirzaker** Kirkham	1:24:054
3 **John Potter** Essex	1:24:699
4 **Dave Every** Ellesmere Port	1:25:431
5 **Jamie Nixon** Glasgow	1:26:060
6 **Andrew Mills** Dundee	1:27:872
7 **Allen Gage** Co Antrim	1:32:335
8 **Toby Everill** Oxford	1:37:260
9 **Ryan Wilkinson** Oxford	1:40:375
10 **Geraint Evans** NGC	1:43:118

MUSHROOM CITY

1 **Bart Savelkouls** Netherlands	1:41:228
2 **Andrew Mills** Dundee	1:46:700
3 **Dave Every** Ellesmere Port	1:47:655
4 **Jamie Stirzaker** Kirkham	1:47:984
5 **John Potter** Essex	1:50:406
6 **Jamie Nixon** Glasgow	1:50:638
7 **Toby Everill** Oxford	2:00:540
8 **Neil Gage** Co Antrim	2:00:830
9 **Allen Gage** Co Antrim	2:01:217
10 **Ryan Wilkinson** Oxford	2:01:222

YOSHI CIRCUIT

1 **Bart Savelkouls** Netherlands	1:46:888
2 **Andrew Mills** Dundee	1:51:702
3 **Dave Every** Ellesmere Port	1:54:141
4 **Jamie Stirzaker** Kirkham	1:56:691
5 **Darren Bolton** No fixed abode	1:59:048
6 **John Potter** Essex	1:59:119
7 **Jamie Nixon** Glasgow	2:00:488
8 **Toby Everill** Oxford	2:08:126
9 **Allen Gage** Co Antrim	2:10:831
10 **Ryan Wilkinson** Oxford	2:14:168

DK MOUNTAIN

1 **Bart Savelkouls** Netherlands	1:56:506
2 **Dave Every** Ellesmere Port	1:58:531
3 **John Potter** Essex	2:12:303
4 **Jamie Stirzaker** Kirkham	2:14:496
5 **Jamie Nixon** Glasgow	2:15:001
6 **Neil Gage** Co Antrim	2:15:685
7 **Andrew Mills** Dundee	2:17:552
8 **Allen Gage** Co Antrim	2:18:192
9 **Toby Everill** Oxford	2:30:212
10 **Ryan Wilkinson** Oxford	2:32:927

SPECIAL CUP

WARIO COLOSSEUM

1 **Bart Savelkouls** Netherlands	2:07:410
2 **Dave Every** Ellesmere Port	2:15:334
3 **John Potter** Essex	2:18:886
4 **Jamie Stirzaker** Kirkham	2:20:045
5 **Jamie Nixon** Glasgow	2:20:672
6 **Andrew Mills** Dundee	2:25:395
7 **Allen Gage** Co Antrim	2:31:103
8 **Toby Everill** Oxford	2:32:765
9 **Paul Blunt** Nottingham	2:33:180
10 **Ryan Wilkinson** Oxford	2:34:550

DINO DINO JUNGLE

1 **Bart Savelkouls** Netherlands	1:50:186
2 **Dave Every** Ellesmere Port	1:59:693
3 **John Potter** Essex	2:00:660
4 **Jamie Stirzaker** Kirkham	2:01:781
5 **Andrew Mills** Dundee	2:04:990
6 **Allen Gage** Co Antrim	2:09:351
7 **Jamie Nixon** Glasgow	2:09:681
8 **Toby Everill** Oxford	2:19:685
9 **Ryan Wilkinson** Oxford	2:20:822
10 **Geraint Evans** NGC	2:22:640

BOWSER'S CASTLE

1 **Bart Savelkouls** Netherlands	2:29:899
2 **Dave Every** Ellesmere Port	2:35:560
3 **Jamie Stirzaker** Kirkham	2:42:141
4 **Andrew Mills** Dundee	2:43:135
5 **John Potter** Essex	2:44:139
6 **Jamie Nixon** Glasgow	2:45:262
7 **Darren Bolton** No fixed abode	2:51:524
8 **Allen Gage** Co Antrim	2:59:468
9 **Toby Everill** Oxford	2:59:990
10 **Ryan Wilkinson** Oxford	3:07:590

RAINBOW ROAD

1 **Bart Savelkouls** Netherlands	3:08:123
2 **Dave Every** Ellesmere Port	3:13:733
3 **John Potter** Essex	3:15:907
4 **Andrew Mills** Dundee	3:17:204
5 **Jamie Nixon** Glasgow	3:19:098
6 **Jamie Stirzaker** Kirkham	3:26:682
7 **Neil Gage** Co Antrim	3:30:695
8 **Allen Gage** Co Antrim	3:35:102
9 **Ryan Wilkinson** Oxford	3:37:784
10 **Geraint Evans** NGC	3:39:135

Send all entries to: Mushroom Kingdom Kart Champ. **NGC** 30 Monmouth Street, Bath, BA1 2BW

NGC GUARANTEE
TIPS, CHEATS
PROBLEMS SOLVED
EVERYTHING
YOU NEED!

THE TIPS YOU NEED FOR THE GAMES YOU'RE PLAYING...

TIPS EXTRA





CRASH NITRO KART

GET DINGODILE
Win the Red Gem Cup and this bizarrely-named beast is yours.

ZAM
Win the Purple Gem Cup.

ZEM
Win the Green Gem Cup.

HYPER SPACEWAY TRACK
Finish in first on all the races in the game's Adventure Mode.

TERRA DOME TRACK
Find and collect all the purple tokens in the game's Adventure Mode.

FAKE CRASH
Using an Evil team member, pick any track and score 50 consecutive boosts.

PURA
Using any character from the Bandicoot team, do 50 consecutive boosts on any track to unlock Pura.

N. TROPY
Beat all N.Tropy ghosts in Time Trial.

POLAR
Win the Blue Gem cup.

REAL VELO
Win two Sceptors.

SUPER BUST-A-MOVE ALL STARS

UNLOCK FUNGILA AND KATZE
Enter Y, D-Pad right, D-Pad left, Y at the title screen.

UNLOCK ANOTHER WORLD
Enter Y, D-Pad left, D-Pad right, Y at the title screen…



1080° AVALANCHE

EXTREME MODE
Win the Expert Championship.

ALTERNATE COSTUMES
Finish Expert Championship.



ALTERNATE BOARD DESIGNS
Collect all Time Trial coins.

BONES
Beat Extreme Mode using Rob.

CRYSTAL
Beat Extreme Mode using Akari.

FROSTY
Beat Extreme Mode using Ricky.

MIMI
Beat the game's Extreme Mode using Tara.

TITANIUM
Beat the game's Extreme Mode using Kamen.

NGC READER KNOWLEDGE!

In Mario Kart, if you find yourself in need of a 180° spin after, say, being hit by a green shell, then make sure you're almost at a standstill, hold both L + R, then tilt to the direction and press on the gas!
Jon Youngs, via email.



CHARACTER BOARD #2
Find two Time Trial coins.

CHARACTER BOARD #3
Find five Time Trial coins.

CHARACTER BOARD #4
Find nine Time Trial coins.

MR BEAKS
Win two trophies.

NES CONTROLLER
Win six trophies.

PENCIL
Win nine Trophies.

ROCKET
Win 15 trophies.

PAINTBRUSH
Find seven coins when you're playing in Time Trial mode.

MARIO PARTY 5

UNLOCK BOMB-OMB WALL
Buy every machine part.

UNLOCK BOWSER PUNCH
Buy every machine part.

UNLOCK BOWSER NIGHTMARE
Win all three competitions on Hard.

UNLOCK FRIGHTMARE
Finish Bowser's nightmare in Story mode.

UNLOCK INTENSE DIFFICULTY
Finish Story mode on Hard.

UNLOCK DK BODY
Beat DK in the Battle Competition on the Hard difficulty setting.

UNLOCK DK ENGINE
Beat DK in the Battle Competition on the Hard difficulty setting.

UNLOCK DK GUN
Beat DK in the Battle Competition on the Hard difficulty setting.

UNLOCK DK TYRES
Beat DK in the Battle Competition on the Hard difficulty setting.

UNLOCK FLAG COMPETITION
Complete the Battle Competition on the Hard difficulty setting.

UNLOCK ROBO-RABBIT COMPETITION
Win the Flag Competition on the Hard difficulty setting.

UNLOCK SKOLAR BODY
Win all three competitions on Hard.

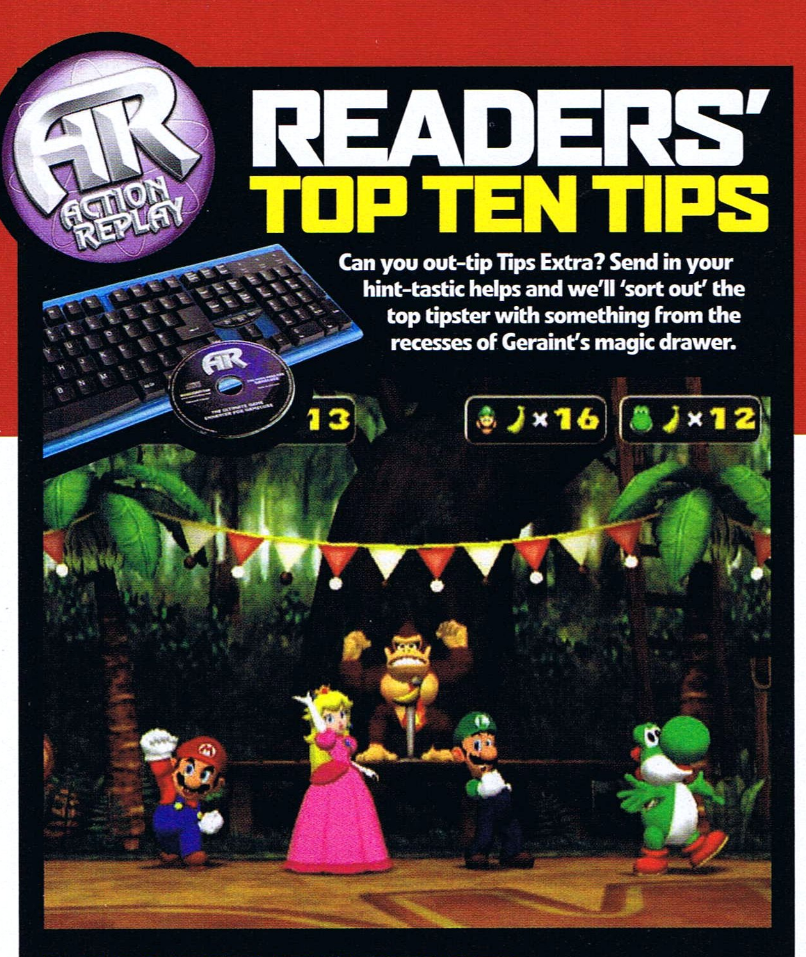
UNLOCK SKOLAR ENGINE
Win all three competitions on Hard.

UNLOCK SKOLAR GUN
Win all three competitions on Hard.

UNLOCK SKOLAR TYRES
Win all three competitions on Hard.



READERS' TOP TEN TIPS



Can you out-tip Tips Extra? Send in your hint-tastic helps and we'll 'sort out' the top tipster with something from the recesses of Geraint's magic drawer.

1. MARIO PARTY 5

Easy mini-game unlock

Can't be bothered to go through process of actually *playing* the board sections? Well, here's the perfect remedy for unlocking those minigames. Simply start a game and then turn your character over to the CPU and let it play the game for you.
Hannah Moorcock, Leeds

2. SOUL CALIBUR 2

Guard Impact
I always found timing guard impact quite tricky until I noticed something. If you activate your guard impact the second you see your opponent's attack animation begin, you should deflect their blow every time.
Kelly Harwood, Leicester

3. HITMAN 2

Hit run
Instead of running while being shot at, tap the control stick fast and 47 will seem to float at the speed of running, while making the sound of walking!
Lee Fung, Farnborough

4. SOUL CALIBUR 2

Early attack
When your opponent does a horizontal atttack, do a vertical one straight away; it will knock the attack away, leaving you ready to smack him in the face.
Jamie Chalmers, Hitchin

5. WIND WAKER

Easy money
Go to Headstone Island and land on different parts of the beach before slashing with your sword. Green and Blue rupees will pop out.
Tim Moule, Cambridgeshire

6. TRUE CRIME

Good Cop
Low on Good Cop points? Wander the streets searching everyone. Eventually you'll find people to 'bust properly'.
Scott Burgess, Cleethorpes.

7. 007 NIGHTFIRE

Easy rider
Go to the Exchange level. Right at the start a truck pulls up. Get in the back for a gold medal and an easy ride through the level.
Ben King, Peterborough

8. VIEWTIFUL JOE

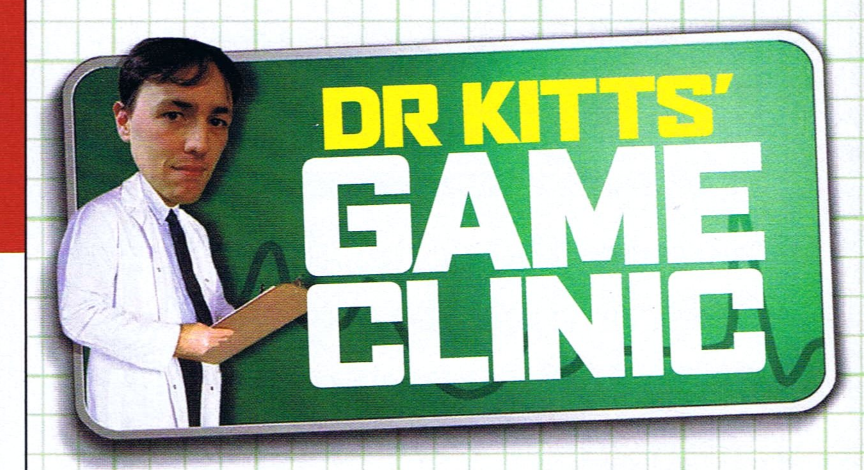
Loaded
When you're on the Spaceship level, jump to the top and in one of the boxes is a red bottle. Now go into slow-mo and find a ballerina robot. Punch it and kick it away. Now punch every enemy and stay in slow-mo. Keep doing this to every enemy you see and you'll rack up huge amounts of Viewtifuls.
Luke Haugh, Comberton

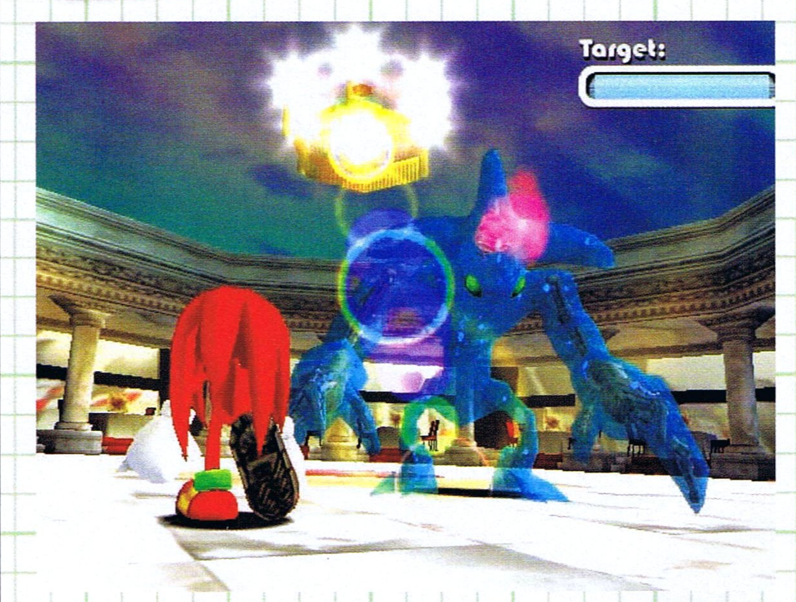
9. MARIO SUNSHINE

Flip 'n' Drip
I've noticed that if you hold down the R and A buttons, not only will you backflip, but you'll also spray droplets from your FLUDD.
Clifford Palmer, Telford

10. TIMESPLITTERS 2

Monkey Mayhem
To get an easy gold on this challenge, aim for the pillar in the middle of the ground to the left and then estimate the height that the melons come at. Most of the monkeys cross this section so all you have to do is adjust the height of your aim. This also reduces the risk of shooting freed monkeys.
Lewis Voightländer-Ford, Milton Keynes





Rubbing salt into the wounds. It'll help them heal, honestly.

Dr Kitts,
How do I find the hidden eggs in *Sonic Adventure DX*?
Tom Greenwood, High Wycome

Dr Kitts places a bowl of bread and milk by the back door and waits patiently, drooling…
The silver egg can be found in the Mystic Ruins. Go to the waterfall area and head into the lake. You'll find a strange wall panel to the right. Push it and the egg will come out of the waterfall. For the gold egg, head over to the area where Sonic fought Chaos for the first time and in one of the palm trees you'll find an egg-shaped rock. Get it and take it to the antique store, replacing it with the gold egg you find there. Lastly, for the onyx egg, go to the Egg Carrier Prison Cell where Amy was locked up and you'll find the onyx egg (in a different cell). Hit the switch to open the the cell to get to it.

Dr Kitts,
Is there any point me playing though *Wind Waker* for a second time?
James Cross, Southampton

Dr Kitts really appreciates the feel of tanned leather….
Well, you do get to play through the game in your pyjamas – which is, erm, interesting – and you get to understand what Jabu and the Deku tree are saying.

Airfix Kitts,
I imported *Phantasy Star Online III* thinking it would have an English translation like *EP 1 & 2* did but, erm, it didn't. According to people in the *PSO1&2* lobbies, there's an Action Replay code to unlock the 'English Mode'. Is this true?
Giles, via email

Dr Kitts tries to forcibly insert a chicken into the ace of spades.
It's true, although the translation isn't 100% complete from what we hear. Still, it'll certainly help you understand more of what's going on….

1. OHBY-Q4WD-S87JA
2. FXZ7-V2X4-J6X9A
3. KBFO-ROR3-DSNMJ
4. USOV-O8EU-KG9D2
5. FZMW-GTY7-9SMJG
6. UVTV-EUV4-3JXUJ
7. JNTP-HLYE-KJ2VE
8. TAH6-VKBW-4CSOD
9. J83B-33PR-4M8ZS
10. 74QT-A84N-XOSJ6
11. XMCR-4OVF-K99RM
12. 8RK2-W3FV-968XN
13. CVAE-ZVKC-BTQV8
14. QBAT-72WD-44AHS






We've got the codes! In the bank. Yes. Here they are. (Runs).

MEDAL OF HONOR RISING SUN

Infinite Ammo
G4AB-N7ZP-V1BC2
HKR3-JHVH-9R3RD

Unlock All Missions
EG30-RM91-U1BRH
C0A5-J49V-WKWJY

Have All Bonuses
ZFUF-UMPP-N3RZ4
2YEU-E3F9-J7C3W

Bouncy Ball Mode
0CQ1-VCMV-2Y16E
7N9A-QFZH-VCG9M

Master Code
RZBV-HT2N-EVJEP
VF43-Z02R-F3G74



DY5A-NHB2-NG3QA
8BGP-HAA3-TBKTC
K9K0-04RB-BNNVZ
Z5NC-5AVE-GGJ6G
K6UJ-A2HB-YBT0F
8Z21-N1PR-29P16
YGAJ-VCAZ-EHZTK
4TYZ-1F3Q-1WE8C
K06Z-R0JE-901EW
MBDY-XTNP-Z2KVJ
DQUN-TD71-X7KE0
E9FZ-A3QA-YCERP
3DG0-ZCCM-AMTUZ
3DG0-ZCCM-AMTUZ

TRUE CRIME

Master Code
GYG2-6XPU-1NZ9Q
91KX-Y748-BU1UG

Infinite Health
W1V7-E1DT-3RBHV
42GG-996T-35FFW

Infinite Ammo/No Reload
C69D-ZAP1-7ZTC2
U5XF-U9UD-H3YMJ
WKPB-FRX3-3H29G

Infinite Time
QCRT-TZAP-J3FP4
2VDU-87D9-TR86X

Civil Unrest Never Rises
6EUT-R22E-QPRG6
A41V-4PT2-NGFWT
J6CC-1Q01-2NZY4

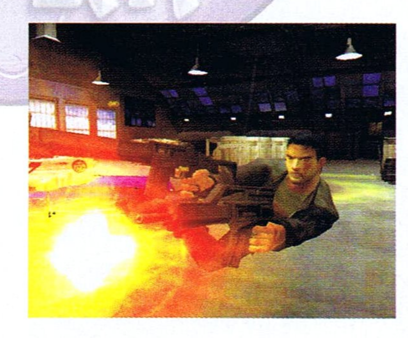
Civil Unrest Rises Quickly
YAXU-G8C1-805QK
EUU5-P768-A69GP
M3Y8-1TC6-EZENN

Never Commit Bad Deeds
0TZ3-A8W5-BD2WY
30YW-1N8B-NRRA0
0VMN-AMUC-NNGGF

Do One Bad Deed For Max Bad Deeds
T98Y-A9DA-U8ZDZ
HTXA-F132-T3J4U

Do Any Deed For Max Badges
J2UA-PU5C-KB0UE
NZBV-EKVN-XH1BA
K4T7-2602-HEJBC

Do Any Deed For Max Good Deeds
K40F-4YF6-6G65V
NZBV-EKVN-XH1BA
K4T7-2602-HEJBC
FUTN-52A8-6831W



1080° AVALANCHE

Everything Unlocked
ZFVY-V6QH-WDK53
1Y7V-Q40K-0JAVX
9HD2-H7BE-YK0JV



Master Code
8C96-0N4T-63Q1K
5V90-DWFY-GCVXN

Time Trial: Found Five Coin Pieces
GZ5T-HADH-NGPBM
BAF8-QT5K-5N9WC

No Damage
AKJU-1G1J-FJ47Z
G54A-V7E3-5U5X4

Unlimited Jump Timer
UBXB-D22R-MG29V
7GER-M40K-P0V8E

Downhill Boost (Press X)
V1KG-NGP8-D224P
XCV7-0RNZ-8ZPV6
0T0F-RWWB-R8K2D

CRASH NITRO KART

Master Code
32MZ-WC1E-9TEHK
EWC5-DP06-7ZG3Z

Everything Unlocked
GK59-DBMX-9NX76
Q4R5-Y87Q-Z5NCP



YOUR TOP TIPS SHARE THE KNOWLEDGE AND BAG YOURSELF A PRIZE...

HERE'S MY TOP TIP...

IT'S FOR

AND THIS IS HOW IT WORKS

Found an interesting tip, secret or quirky thing in one of your games? Send it into us immediately! Each month we'll stick the best into our Readers' Tips section. If your tip is the number one readers' tip, we'll send you a luvverly prize. Good, huh? But don't send us cheat codes from the net. Quirky!



Name ....

Address ....

........................Postcode

Send to:
TIPS EXTRA, **NGC**, 30 Monmouth Street, Bath, BA1 2BW or e-mail ngc@futurenet.co.uk

If you don't want to cut up your magazine, send a photocopy instead, and continue on another bit of paper if you run out of room. Or just buy two copies of the mag. That way you can keep a spare copy in the khazi, to help focus your mind.



AND NOW… WITNESS THE DESTRUCTIVE POWER OF THESE ARMED AND FULLY OPERATIONAL GAMING LEAGUES!

I'M THE BEST

WIN!

Have you received anything nice during the last few weeks? A *game*, perhaps? If you have, check out our challenges on the next few pages. Absolutely anyone can enter, as long as the games are played on a Gamecube. You get points for each challenge you complete successfully, and your points are added up and could earn you a place on the leaderboard on page 103. Even if you only like one or two games in our selection, why not have a go anyhow? You can compare your scores with other **NGC** readers' on the little table beneath each challenge. All the details on how to enter are on page 103.

One word about entries, though – make sure you include ALL the evidence we ask for. *Mario Kart* entries are now video-only, as an Action Replay cheat that allows you to stop the in-game times has come onto the market. However, when photo evidence was permitted we had people failing to show us that they'd used both characters required for Heavy Rider, and we've had other entries that didn't show a clear 30-point lead for Tour Dominator. If your score appears not to have been registered, it may well be that your evidence was not sufficient.

If you've got any questions about your scores, the rules or anything similar, feel free to get in touch with us – you can send email to **ngc@futurenet.co.uk** with **ITB:** in the subject line.

MISSION IMPOSSIBLE!

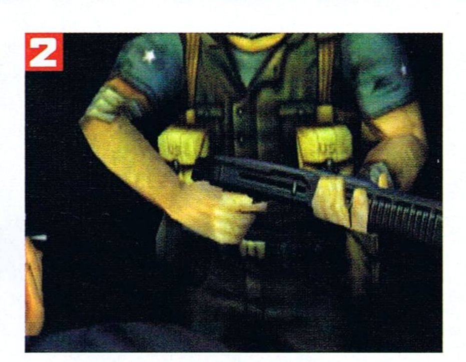
Mission Impossible? That'd be coping with post-Christmas comedown. Nerves are pretty strained around here at the moment. Kittsy's turned to flinging his own effluent at anyone who dares to mention The Darkness, Paul's still in his sleeping bag under the desk and we've not heard anything from Geraint since he wandered out onto the streets of Bath mumbling something about 'Jimmy Neutron' not being his 'lover'… or was that 'mother'? Whatever…

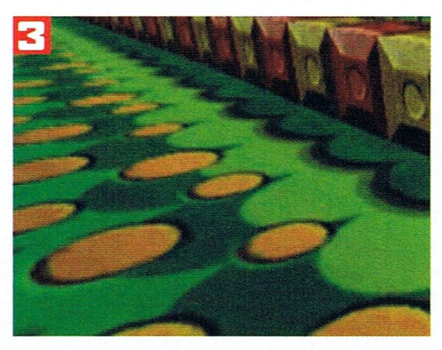
THIS MONTH: TEXTURE HUNT… (AGAIN!)

Seeing as you all 'loved' the last Texture Hunt, we thought we'd give you a fresh batch of screens to agonise over for another month. Once again, we want you to tell us which game each of these shots are taken from as well as which level you can find them in. Oh, and we've even put in another 'trick' question for you – and please make sure you get it, because we had hours of fun berating Geraint after he confidently claimed'no one' would 'get that cheeky *Capcom vs SNK*' shot he slipped in. Best of luck. **Send your answers for all four shots by the 25th of February please.**

1



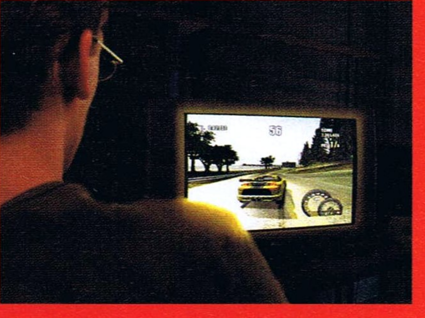
2


3


4


BEAT THE BEST!

Come and have a go if you think they're hard enough! This is how you turn your talent into a shot at a stonking prize.



1 Ditch your family, ignore your friends and practise until you have achieved perfection. But not beyond the cut-off date. That'd be dim.



2 Get a score above our 'To Qualify' minimum – you don't have to beat the top 5. Gather the evidence (video/photo) and send it to us.



3 Wait an issue or two and see where your score gets you. The more challenges you nail, the higher you climb in the table…

NEW! I'M THE BEST
The Best just got even Better…

MARIO KART: DOUBLE DASH!!



TOUR DOMINATOR

WE WANT You to win by as many points as you can on the All Cup Tour.
THE LAW One racer, 150cc. You can pick any characters/vehicles.
TO QUALIFY 30 point lead
EVIDENCE We need video now, as timer-stopping cheats are out.
POINTS 45

1	156 (52pt lead)	Dave Every, Ellesmere Port
2	158 (44pt lead)	M. Knowles, Tunbridge Wells
3	154 (40pt lead)	Matthew Pellett, Spalding
4	154 (36pt lead)	Michael Seaward, Stanley
5	153 (43pt lead)	Mark Puddifoot, Swindon

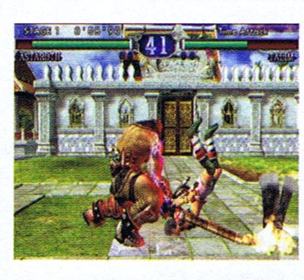
HEAVY RIDER

WE WANT Best time on Yoshi Circuit using DK and Bowser
THE LAW Must be in 150cc GP.
TO QUALIFY Time of 2:10:000 with 30 points (20 points from previous two races, +10).
EVIDENCE Video, so we know you're not stopping the timer.
POINTS 30

1	2:03:295	Dave Every, Ellesmere Port
2	2:06:866	Michael Seaward, Stanley
3	2:08:798	Ewan McKenzie, Dumfries
4	2:09:209	Mark Puddifoot, Swindon
5	2:09:341	Matthew Pellett, Spalding

SOUL CALIBUR 2

NEW! CHALLENGE





TIME ROTH

WE WANT Your fastest time for the standard Time Attack.
THE LAW You must use Astaroth, and you're not allowed to play the 'Extra' version of the mode.
TO QUALIFY Five minutes
EVIDENCE A snap of the Time Attack ranking screen.
POINTS 25

1	2'08"48	Rex McGee, Trowbridge
2	2'15"66	Matthew Pellett, Spalding
3	2'24"48	Lewis Voigtländer-Ford, Milton Keynes
4	2'57"10	Dave Every, Ellesmere Port
5	3'54"18	Peter Bottomley, Cheshire

JUGGLE MUGGER

WE WANT Score as many juggle hits as possible in Practice mode.
THE LAW Only hits when opponent is in the air count. Last hit must 'ring out' opponent.
TO QUALIFY Seven hits
EVIDENCE Video evidence of the juggle combo in action.
POINTS 35

1	???	Your name here, Next month!
2	???	Your name here, Next month!
3	???	Your name here, Next month!
4	???	Your name here, Next month!
5	???	Your name here, Next month!

To spice things up a bit, you'll notice that we've also included extra Random Challenges – which can be related to games, or be completely whimsical. Again, fulfil our wishes to the letter and points will be yours. Simple. There's even a Spot the Ball competition (but we've replaced it with spot the Pac-Man this month). Keray-zee…

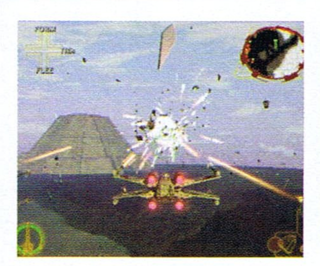
VIRTUAL REALITY YOU!
Boo who?

THIS MONTH SPOOKY LIKENESS

Mario is man-shaped. Donkey Kong has two arms and legs. Even Princess Peach is a simple challenge if you're prepared to don a pink dress. So this month we're being cruel and asking you to **dress up as King Boo, complete with crown.** All Boos will receive 20 points, but only ones that are deemed to be satisfactorily spherical and limbless will achieve all 70 points. All photos must arrive by Wednesday 25th February. We'll be showing off the best efforts in the magazine – so it's worth putting in that extra bit of effort…



ROGUE SQUADRON III: REBEL STRIKE



ESCAPE FROM YAVIN

WE WANT Fastest time for Revenge of the Empire
THE LAW 120 kills minimum.
TO QUALIFY 5:00
EVIDENCE Pic of the level's record screen.
POINTS 20

1	4:44	Lewis Voigtländer-Ford, Milton Keynes
2	4:48	David Gruber, Norwich
3	4:53	Michael Grey, Exeter
4	???	Your name here, Next month!
5	???	Your name here, Next month!

A-WING EXECUTOR

WE WANT As many kills as you can get on Attack on the Executor.
THE LAW You must get bronze.
TO QUALIFY 80
EVIDENCE Pic of results screen.
POINTS 30

1	84	Lewis Voigtländer-Ford, Milton Keynes
2	81	Michael Grey, Exeter
3	80	David Gruber, Norwich
4	???	Your name here, Next month!
5	???	Your name here, Next month!



PAC-MAN SPOT THE PAC

X MARKS THE SPOT

We're fed up of balls. Pah! Round, leathery, pointless objects, like Kirby after six months on a sun bed. If it's round you want, how about a Pac-Man instead? We've removed Pac from this picture and all you have to do is put an X where you think the little chap's lurking. (We will accept photocopies if you don't want to cut out your magazine.)

❑ The entry we receive marking the point closest to Pac-Man by Wednesday 25th February wins **40 points.**

SEND YOUR ENTRIES TO… I'M THE BEST, NGC MAGAZINE, 30 MONMOUTH STREET, BATH, BA1 2BW

NEW!

I'M THE BEST

The Best just got even Better…

SUPER SMASH BROS MELEE



YOSHI BASHING

WE WANT Your fastest time on Event Match Lv 4, Dino Wrangling.
THE LAW Must use Roy. Yes, Roy. No lives lost either. How d'you fancy some of that, eh?
TO QUALIFY 45 seconds
EVIDENCE We need you to supply video footage of the entire bout, if you'd be so kind.
POINTS 20

1	00.50s	**Matthew Pellett**	Spalding
2	00.50s	**Ewan McKenzie**	Dumfries
3	00.53s	**Rex McGee**	Trowbridge
4	00.92s	**Dave Every**	Ellesmere Port
5	01.18s	**Simon Mason**	West Parley

HAMMER TIME

WE WANT To see you get as many KOs as possible in a two-minute melee match. Shouldn't be too difficult. You're very good, you know…
THE LAW Hammer only item. V. High appearance. CPU lv1. Play as Kirby vs 3 Puffs in Eagle-Onett.
TO QUALIFY 10 KOs
EVIDENCE A video, please.
POINTS 25

1	28	**Dave Every**	Ellesmere Port
2	13	**Matthew Pellett**	Spalding
3	12	**Simon Mason**, West Parley; **Rex McGee**, Trowbridge	
4	11	**David Williamson**	Bathgate
5	10	**Ewan McKenzie**	Dumfries

Need input! Input, Stephanie! 0101011… Go-Sen is alive.

DAVID GOSEN'S INHUMAN GAMING EFFICIENCY DIRECTIVE

You're worthless. You ape-descendants didn't beat my last challenge so I'm going to try making it easier for you.

In Viewtiful Joe, after completing the first mission and killing the bat, you are shown all your ratings for the mission. I am awarding 101.01 points to anyone who gets ALMOST all (100%) 'rainbow V' ratings for that level – now I'm allowing you to get three non-rainbow V's.

Now go and do it. It is possible to photograph the required screen, but you may also send video. Only evidence that arrives by the 25th February complies with the directive.

F-ZERO GX



COSMO CARNAGE

WE WANT Your highest possible kill count on Cosmo Terminal.
THE LAW You must use the Golden Fox in the Grand Prix on Master difficulty and – get this – *win*.
TO QUALIFY 15 kills
EVIDENCE Video only, showing you selecting Master difficulty.
POINTS 35

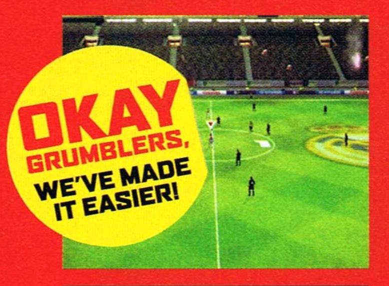
1	17	**Rex McGee**	Trowbridge
2	15	**Dave Every**	Ellesmere Port
3	15	**Ryan Wilkinson**	Oxford
4	???	**Your name here**	Next month!
5	???	**Your name here**	Next month!

AEROPOLIS TIME ATTACK

WE WANT Your fastest race time down Aeropolis: Multiplex.
THE LAW You must use any original vehicle. No custom machines allowed.
TO QUALIFY 2'28"000
EVIDENCE A shot of the Time Attack ranking table. Warning: DO NOT use the time from your records data.
POINTS 30

1	2'01"917	**Matthew Pellett**	Spalding
2	2'09"915	**Rex McGee**	Trowbridge
3	2'19"346	**Steve Brooks**	Broughton Astley
4	2'20"492	**David Williamson**	Bathgate
5	2'21"018	**Dave Every**	Ellesmere Port

FIFA 2004



GERAINT'S FANTASY

WE WANT You to thrash Cardiff City using Swansea City.
THE LAW No memory cards, default settings. That is Geraint's law, see.
TO QUALIFY 5 goal lead
EVIDENCE Video from the no mem card screen to the final result.
POINTS 30

1	?-?	**Your name here**	Next month!
2	?-?	**Your name here**	Next month!
3	?-?	**Your name here**	Next month!
4	?-?	**Your name here**	Next month!
5	?-?	**Your name here**	Next month!

IKARUGA




ROBOT CHALLENGE #3

WE WANT Your highest chain on the third level.
THE LAW Surprisingly, there is no law. Use any difficulty you want. Go on, pick the easiest one…
TO QUALIFY 40
EVIDENCE A picture of the final results screen is fine.
POINTS 30

1	109	**Rex McGee**	Trowbridge
2	97	**Steve Brooks**	Broughton Astley
3	96	**Phil "PH" Hughes**	Cheshire
4	44	**Matthew Pellett**	Spalding
5	42	**Peter Bottomley**, Cheshire; **L. Voigtländer-Ford**, Milton Keynes	

CAPCOM VS SNK



COMBO EXHIBITION

WE WANT Your highest combo using any character.
THE LAW C-Groove, Ratio 4, and AC mode only. Combo can be executed in Training mode.
TO QUALIFY 22 hit combo
EVIDENCE Video of the combo in action.
POINTS 35

1	28	**Matthew Pellett**	Spalding
2	25	**David Gruber**	Norwich
3	23	**Ryan Wilkinson**	Oxford
4	???	**Your name here**	Next month!
5	???	**Your name here**	Next month!

BURNOUT 2



HEART BREAK TRIAL

WE WANT Your best overall time on the Heart Break Hills track.
THE LAW None really; you can use whatever car you want but not the reversed version of the track.
TO QUALIFY 1'43"000
EVIDENCE A picture of the records screen you get after the race.
POINTS 25

1	1'42"040	**Rex McGee**	Trowbridge
2	1'42"279	**Dave Every**	Ellesmere Port
3	1'42"483	**Ewan McKenzie**	Dumfries
4	1'42"597	**David Gruber**	Norwich
5	1'42"939	**Matthew Pellett**	Spalding

SEND YOUR ENTRIES TO… I'M THE BEST, **NGC** MAGAZINE, 30 MONMOUTH STREET, BATH, BA1 2BW

I'M THE BEST

The Best just got even Better…

KITTSY'S KARNIVAL OF KILLING!

GREEN MACHINE

I want you to show me your aiming skills using the old greeners in *Mario Kart*. I suggest you pick both Koopa characters for this challenge.

In *Double Dash*, score nine hits using green shells on the track of your choice. Send me your evidence (I need video confirmation of each hit, please) by the 25th February.

Send in videotaped evidence of your handiwork – and win **40 points**.

WAVE RACE: BLUE STORM



TIME TRIAL #1

WE WANT Your fastest overall time on the Lost Temple course.
THE LAW Must be attempted in Expert mode – using any character you want.
TO QUALIFY A time of 1'32"000
EVIDENCE A simple snap (film or digital) or video of your records screen, clearly indicating that Expert mode was attempted.
POINTS 25

1	1'28"222	Dave Every	Ellesmere Port
2	1:30:198	Karl Frogmore	Leeds
3	1'30"552	Matthew Pellett	Spalding
4	1'31"365	Simon Starkey	Somerset
5	1'31"762	Karl Frogmore	Leeds



TIME TRIAL #2

WE WANT Your fastest lap time on Aspen Lake.
THE LAW Once again, this challenge needs to be attempted on the Expert difficulty setting. You can use any character you want.
TO QUALIFY We need to see a time of 0'24"000
EVIDENCE A video or photo of your records screen.
POINTS 20

1	0'20"780	Dave Every	Ellesmere Port
2	0'22"175	David Lent	Leeds
3	0'23"298	Matthew Pellett	Spalding
4	0:23:562	Karl Frogmore	Leeds
5	0'23"938	Simon Starkey	Somerset

SSX3



PEAK 2 TRIAL

WE WANT Your Peak 2 Race time.
THE LAW Use Kaori. You can configure her stats any way you wish.
TO QUALIFY 15:00
EVIDENCE Video yourself (well, y'know, what's on the screen, naturally, not *yourself*) selecting Transport from the Pause menu, picking Peak 2 Race, and the run.
POINTS 25

1	12:57	David Gruber	Norwich
2	13:36	Karl Frogmore	Leeds
3	13:47	Toby Everil	Oxford
4	14:23	Michael Grey	Exeter
5	???	Your name here	Next month!

SLOPE STYLIN'

WE WANT Your best score for the final heat of the R&B – Slopestyle (Peak 1).
THE LAW Use any character you like – with any stats. Generous, aren't we?
TO QUALIFY 450,000 points
EVIDENCE A simple pic (again, either digital or film) of the final 'Top 5' results screen will do the job nicely. Cheers!
POINTS 35

1	501,364	David Gruber	Norwich
2	489,015	Karl Frogmore	Leeds
3	477,132	Michael Grey	Exeter
4	452,184	Toby Everil	Oxford
5	???	Your name here	Next month!

BILLY HATCHER



CHICKEN LICKIN'

WE WANT Your fastest time on the 'Save the Eight Chickens' mission on Pirate Island.
THE LAW Must get an S-Rank.
TO QUALIFY 15 minutes
EVIDENCE Pic of levels record screen.
POINTS 20

1	00	Your name here	Next month!
2	00	Your name here	Next month!
3	00	Your name here	Next month!
4	00	Your name here	Next month!
5	00	Your name here	Next month!

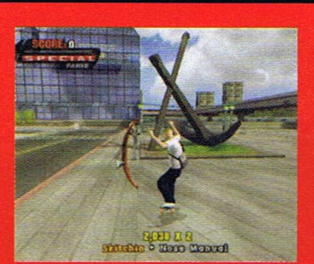


SPECIAL RANKING

WE WANT You to achieve as many S-Ranks as you can.
THE LAW None really, just get those S-Ranks.
TO QUALIFY 15
EVIDENCE A video of all your S-Rank records.
POINTS 30

1	22	Matthew Pellett	Spalding
2	15	Steve Brooks	Broughton Astley
3	15	David Gruber	Norwich
4	00	Your name here	Next month!
5	00	Your name here	Next month!

TONY HAWK'S UNDERGROUND



GRINDLESS COMBO

WE WANT Your best combo score on any level.
THE LAW You're not allowed to grind at all.
TO QUALIFY 150,000 score
EVIDENCE A short video clip of your best combo from start to finish.
POINTS 25

1	757,708	Steve Brooks	Broughton Astley
2	225,036	Matthew Pellett	Spalding
3	159,952	Toby Everill	Oxford
4	151,336	Simon Starkey	Somerset
5	152,898	Karl Frogmore	Leeds



OLLIE OLLIE OLLIE

WE WANT Your highest score off three separate tricks busted on on flat ground.
THE LAW No manuals. No grinds.
TO QUALIFY 1,200 points from three tricks.
EVIDENCE Video of all three tricks, please.
POINTS 20

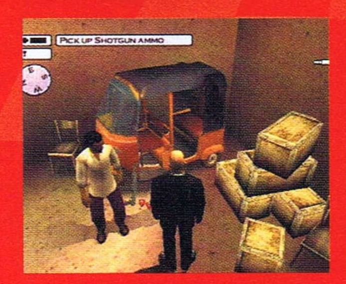
1	5,610	Steve Brooks	Broughton Astley
2	10,512	Matthew Pellett	Spalding
3	1,390	Toby Everill	Oxford
4	1,255	Simon Starkey	Somerset
5	???	Your name here	Next month!

NEW!

I'M THE BEST

The Best just got even Better…

HITMAN 2

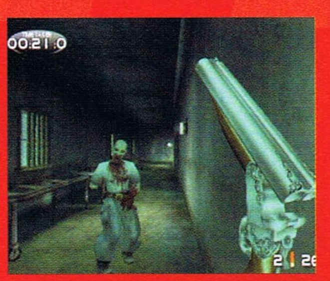


THE HAYAMOTO HIT

WE WANT Your fastest time on the 'Tracking Hayamoto' level.
THE LAW You must achieve a Silent Assassin rating – that means no killing civilians or setting alarms off.
TO QUALIFY 5:00m
EVIDENCE A clear picture of the final status screen will be fine.
POINTS 45

1	3:42	**Matthew Pellett**	Spalding
5	3:53	**David Lent**	Leeds
2	4:40	**David Williamson**	Bathgate
3	4:43	**Steve McGill**	West Lothian
4	4:43	**Lewis Voigtländer-Ford**	Milton Keynes

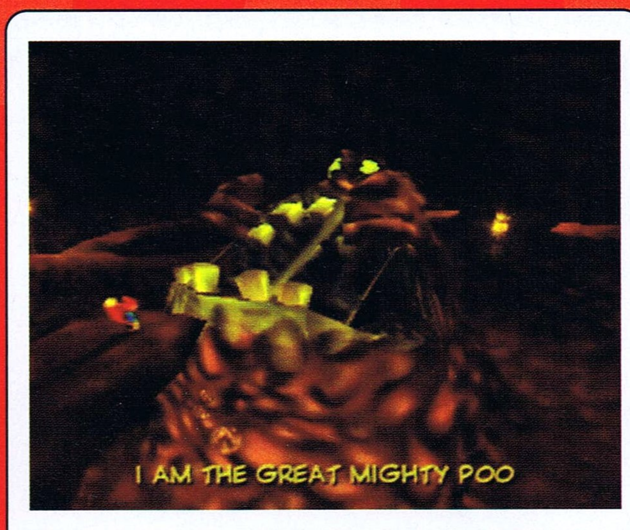
TIMESPLITTERS 2



RHYTHM STICK

WE WANT Your fastest time on 'Hit me baby one morgue time'.
THE LAW No laws as such – but it'll certainly help if you finish the level.
TO QUALIFY 2:00
EVIDENCE A picture of the results screen where it's possible to see what the challenge was.
POINTS 25

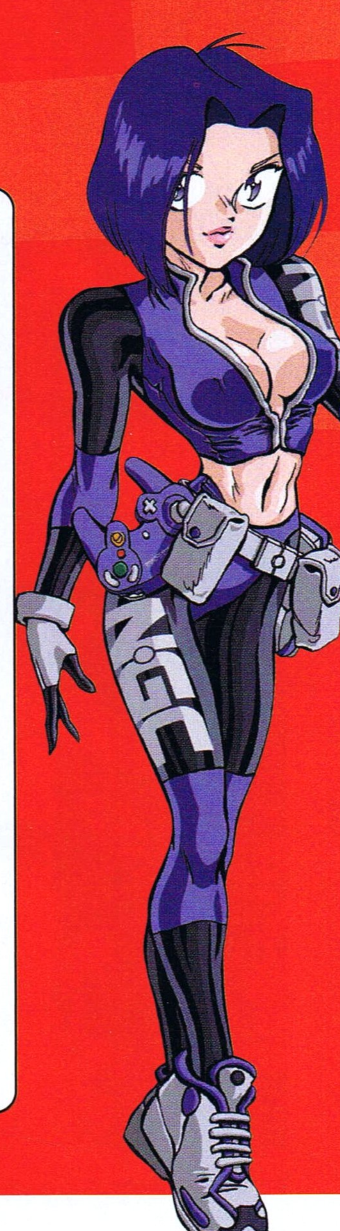
1	46.4s	**Lewis Voigtländer-Ford**	Milton Keynes
1	53.5s	**Phil "PH" Hughes**	Cheshire
2	53.6s	**Andrew Mills**	Dundee
3	53.7s	**Matthew Pellett**	Spalding
4	54.5s	**Rex McGee**	Trowbridge



DIRTY SQUIRREL'S SCAT CHALLENGE

ROLLS AT THE READY…

When nature calls for the male members of the **NGC** team, the nearest place to relieve onesself is the toilets next door. Unfortunately, the tiny 4ft by 5ft room absolutely reeks of urine and, thanks to the anonymous 'logger man', staring into the porcelain bowls is an experience we wouldn't want to wish on anyone. Well, in celebration of this fact we want you to complete the boss battle with Sloparno in the N64's *Conker's Bad Fur Day* with 100% loo roll accuracy. Video evidence of the entire battle by the 25th February for 40 points…





ENTRY FORM

FILL IN THE SCORES!

Name……………………………………

……………………………………

Address……………………………………

……………………………………

……………………………………

……………………………………Postcode……………………

Send to……………………………I'M THE BEST,
NGC Magazine
30 Monmouth Street
Bath, BA1 2BW

If you don't want to cut up your magazine, send a photocopy instead, and continue on another bit of paper if you run out of room. Defaced or illegible papers will be disqualified and burned in the furnaces of Hell, *pour encourager les autres.*

MARIO KART: DOUBLE DASH!!
- ❑ TOUR DOMINATOR ……………
- ❑ HEAVY RIDER ……………

SOUL CALIBUR 2
- ❑ TIME ROTH ……………
- ❑ JUGGLE MUGGER ……………

REBEL STRIKE
- ❑ ESCAPE YAVIN ……………
- ❑ EXECUTOR ……………

SUPER SMASH BROS MELEE
- ❑ YOSHI BASHING ……………
- ❑ HAMMER TIME ……………

F-ZERO GX
- ❑ COSMO CARNAGE ……………
- ❑ AEROPOLIS TIME ATTACK ……………

WAVE RACE: BLUE STORM
- ❑ TIME TRIAL 1 ……………
- ❑ TIME TRIAL 2 ……………

SSX3
- ❑ PEAK 2 TRIAL ……………
- ❑ SLOPE STYLIN' ……………

TONY HAWK'S UNDERGROUND
- ❑ GRINDLESS COMBO ……………
- ❑ OLLIE OLLIE OLLIE ……………

CAPCOM VS NK
- ❑ COMBO EXHIBITION ……………

BURNOUT 2
- ❑ HEART BREAK TRIAL ……………

HITMAN 2
- ❑ HAYAMOTO HIT ……………

TIMESPLITTERS 2
- ❑ RHYTHM STICK ……………

FIFA 2004
- ❑ GERAINT'S FANTASY ……………

IKARUGA
- ❑ ROBO CHALLENGE ……………

BILLY HATCHER
- ❑ CHICKEN LICKIN' ……………
- ❑ SPECIAL RANKING ……………



THE LEADERBOARD
WHERE ARE YOU NOW?…

1 Matthew Pellett Spalding	**2246.01pts**
2 Rex McGee Trowbridge	**1871.01pts**
3 Phil "PH" Hughes Cheshire	**1487.02pts**
4 Steve Brooks Broughton Astley	**1317.02pts**
5 Dave Every Ellesmere Port	**1217.02pts**





6 **Lewis Voigtländer-Ford** Milton Keynes	750pts
7 **Bryan Docherty** Govrock	725pts
8 **Dave "Sphinx" Pugh** Saffron Walden	701.01pts
9 **Michael Rothwell** Wallasey, **Simon Mason** West Parley	691.01pts
10 **Peter Bottomley** Cheshire	620pts
11 **Rob Jones** Poole	580pts
12 **Dermot Ryan** Mullingar	571.01pts
13 **Dean Hailstone** Jarrow	562.02pts
14 **Barry Lewis** Dairsie	560pts
15 **Scott Littlewood** New Costessy	445pts
16 **David Williamson** Bathgate	440pts
17 **Michael Seaward** Stanley	435pts
18 **Chris "plasticcoated" Fletcher** Stockport	385pts
19 **David Lent** Leeds	380pts
20 **Dominic Stroud** Gloucester	365pts
21 **Ewan McKenzie** Dumfries, **Eskil Vestre** Norway	360pts
22 **Andreas Nakkerud** Norway	350pts
23 **Gareth Brownlow** Kilrea	325pts
24 **Mr S** Aberdare	315pts
25 **Andrew McGrae** Southport	285pts
26 **Mark Puddifoot** Swindon	280pts
27 **Toby Lynch** London	260pts
28 **Thomas Cox** Birchington	240pts
29 **Banjo-Fella, Sam Rogerson** Milton Keynes	235pts
30 **Julia McClay** Langley Middleton **Jason Leverett** Great Yarmouth	220pts
31 **Harold Rooney-Nugent** London, **David McDonald** Warwick, **Martin Heule** The Netherlands	215pts
32 **James "Yellow Dart" Walker** Worthing	205pts
33 **Andy Whittle** Leigh	191.01pts
33 **David Gruber** Norwich	200pts
34 **Janne Kaitila** Finland, **Paul Gibb** Cheltenham	185pts
35 **Lee Graham** Bristol	180pts
36 **Matthew Woof** Leamington Spa	165pts
37 **Daniel Livings** Watford**, Norman Glover** Cleveland,	160pts
38 **Daniel Sneddon** Bingley, **Adam Weston** Ballycranbeg	150pts
39 **Angelos Perlegkas** Athens	145pts
40 **Michael Harvey** Ellesmere Port, **Joe Gamble** Ilkley	140pts
41 **Grant David Taylor** Edinburgh, **Josh Ryan** Dursley, **Michael Daniels** Chatham	135pts
42 **Josh Jones** Barnstaple, **Karl Frogmore** Leeds	130pts
43 **Matthew Bickham** Northwood Hills	125pts
44 **Gordon Yeung** Cardiff	120pts
45 **David Cathrine** Edinburgh	115pts
46 **Adam Pollard** Dorset	110pts
47 **Oliver Burnham** Liphook, **Toby Everill** Oxford	105pts
48 **Matthew Duffell** Chorley, **Michael Grey** Exeter	100pts
49 **Ben Case** Camberley, **Steve McGill** West Lothian	95pts
50 **Jamie McGooking** Ayrshire, **David Kosaros** Stockton on Tees, **Ross Main** Linlithgow, **Simon Starkey** Somerset	90pts
51 **Hollie Eggleton** Trowbridge	85pts
52 **Nick Ashplant** Ashplant, **Jake Napper** Great Missinden	80pts
53 **Philip Regan** Liverpool, **Matt D** Hailsham, **Alasdair Campbell** Elston, **James Stock** Norwich	75pts

Each month, the totals will be totted up and balances displayed in the Big Table™. The top five spots at the end of the season win goodies – Numero Uno gets not only planet-wide admiration/envy in equal measure, but hard material goods. We keep track of every entrant's scores, so you can boost your points each month and move onto or up the list. Send us your entry today!



Follow these steps…

PHOTOGRAPHS

1. Use a fast film (200 or 400 ASA).
2. If you're using a digicam then use a slower shutter speed.
3. Turn off the camera's flash (or cover it up) and draw the curtains.

PLEASE NOTE: Any doubts over the legality of your entry will lead to instant disqualification.

VIDEO

1. Plug the Gamecube TV lead into the Signal In socket of your video.
2. Connect the Signal Out socket on your video to your TV.
3. Find a spare channel on the video and search for the signal.
4. After recording the challenge, rewind the tape.

We can't return tapes, sorry.

HEY! IT'S THE CONTINUATION OF...

GAME ON!



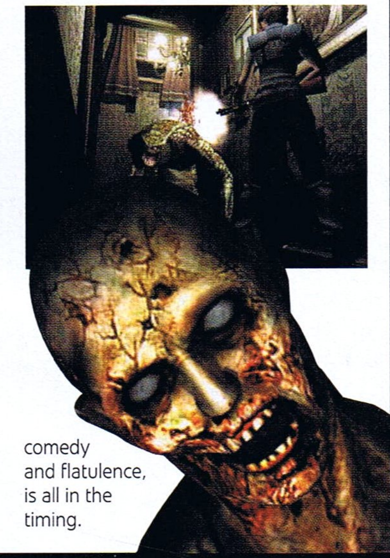


Old games – defeated, finished, waiting to be buried in your local games shop's trade-in section. But wait! Bring your favourite games back to life with the help of Game On – you won't need any electrodes or shambling assistants, and there'll be no need to wait for a dark and stormy night, either. All you need to rejuvenate an old game is an injection of brains, and Game On's absolutely stuffed with smart Thinks from **NGC** readers. What's more, if your Mighty Brain has produced a Game On idea of its own, send it to us at the usual address. The best one we print each month gets a lovely new game in return.

RESIDENT EVIL

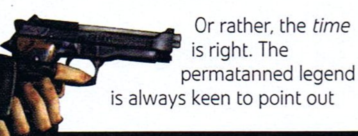






BRUCE'S PRICE IS RIGHT

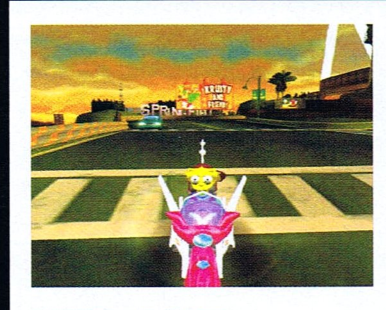
by **Conor Corey, Co Tyrone**

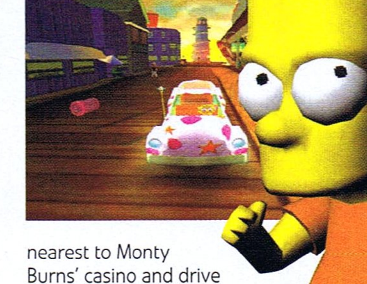


Or rather, the *time* is right. The permatanned legend is always keen to point out to his quiz show guests, "You can go under, but not one penny over". Well, in this case, you can have three minutes under but not one second over, because your task is to **finish *Resident Evil* in Normal mode, getting as close as possible to a finishing time of 3:00:00, without going a second over**. You may use unlimited weapons if you wish, but remember that success in this, as in comedy and flatulence, is all in the timing.

TIME REMAINING  **20 SEC**  **1M 30**  **3 MIN**

THE SIMPSONS HIT AND RUN





HIT AND RUN SPRINT

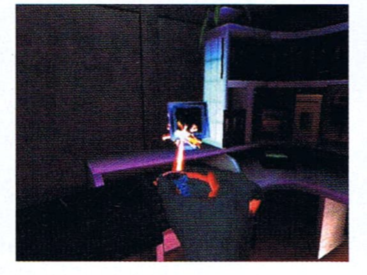
by **Iain Simpson, Maidstone**

Girls are really rubbish drivers, right? Well, you're about to prove the old adage wrong. Playing as bookish little Lisa, go to the side of the Squidport nearest to Monty Burns' casino and drive the Canyonero so that the front wheels are touching the wooden deck. This is going to be your starting point.

Now get out of the car and start laying into passers-by, kicking them good and hard, until you get 'Hit And Run' flash up on screen, then **get back into your car and try to drive through the Squidport to the Duff factory before your Hit And Run meter runs out**. This speeding and random violence is most un-Lisa-like, quite frankly. But who wants to be that square anyway?

METER LEFT  **1/4**  **1/8**  **UNDER 1/8**

JAMES BOND 007 NIGHTFIRE





PUNCH 'EM OUT

by **Danyal Javed**

Choose Multiplayer mode, then start a Versus game. As for the settings, select Any Weapons and Unlimited Time and turn on Enemy Players.

As soon as the game starts, it's up to you to **kill as many enemies as you can**. Easy, you say? Not so, impetuous one. Danyal's challenge also requires you to **kill the enemies using only your fists**. Bond's famous Walther PPK won't be required here, and neither will any other firearms or melee weapons. When we said you should select Any Weapons, we meant the enemies to use them, not you. The more people you kill, the better the medal you'll receive at the end of it all.

KILLS  30   20   10

SOUL CALIBUR 2





THAT'S GOTTA HURT...

by **Gavin Smallwood, Staffordshire**

Enter Practice mode or Extra Practice mode. Choose any character and begin playing. Instead of letting your opponent stand there like a moron, set them to attack you and give them a difficulty level of Hard. (We said that this was going to be painful.) Now, here comes the tricky bit. Without taking any hits yourself, you need to dish out a total damage of at least 200, and preferably a great deal higher.



DAMAGE   800   500 200

NGC CHALLENGES WANTED

NOW IT'S YOUR TURN...

Have you discovered a weird and wonderful new way to play Nintendo games? Can you sum it all up in about 100 words? If you have a challenge you'd like to share with other NGC readers, then we want to hear about it. Jot down a quick explanation of what you've got to do on a piece of paper, set three suitable levels of achievement for gold, silver and bronze medals, stick it in an envelope, and send it to...

GAME ON, NGC Magazine, 30 Monmouth Street, Bath BA1 2BW. Or email ngc@futurenet.co.uk, with Game On as the subject line.

We'll take challenges for absolutely any game on the good ol' 'Cube, but this month we're particularly interested in...



F-ZERO GX



SOUL CALIBUR 2



VIEWTIFUL JOE



BILLY HATCHER

THE BEST GET PRINTED RIGHT HERE, AND OUR FAVOURITE CHALLENGE WILL WIN A SHINY NEW GAMECUBE GAME. DEAL?

30 MONMOUTH STREET/BATH/BA1 2BW

MAILBOX

EMAIL US!

Got something to say? Run out of stamps? Guards won't let you near a pen? Then log on to the interweb and 'get' us 'at'…

ngc@futurenet.co.uk

Include your *name and address* so we know who to credit the letter to. You know it makes sense.

STAR LETTER

The winner of the Star Letter receives a bundle of gaming gear courtesy of Joytech, incorporating two Advanced Controllers, a gold-plated RGB Scart cable, an 8Mb memory card and a GC/GBA link cable. Mint!

'Nearly impossible'

Dear sweet *Mario Kart*, I don't know whether to laugh or cry. The slogan is 'double the drivers, double the fun', but what it should be is 'double the drivers, double the bloody impossibility of completing it'.

After one week of heavy playing I managed to unlock everything, but the blisters on my hands don't seem worth it. Why did Nintendo make it so damn hard to finish?

The 50cc mode is not at all challenging, the 100cc mode is fine, but the 150cc mode is nearly impossible. You need to keep pummelling your enemy with shells just to make fourth place.

Don't get me wrong, I love this game more than my Gamecube itself, but why make it so hard? There are probably some people who still can't unlock the Special Cup. And isn't half the fun of the game completing it and unlocking things? I can't even bear the thought of my memory card wiping my saved data. Do you guys find it hard or is my copy faulty?

Chris Brown, Ipswich

It isn't your copy of the game that's faulty. It's your lack of gaming skill. Honestly, Chris, do you really think there's anyone out there who can't unlock the Special Cup? The lack of retries in the Grand Prix mode makes it a fair bit tougher than it needs to be, but we reckon anyone with two thumbs and at least one reasonably functional eye should be able to complete* Double Dash *without too much trouble. Ed



'Limitless ways'

In response to George Whittaker's letter in issue 88, why should there be a point in the future when games machines have reached their maximum potential?

The developers of games and consoles will always be finding new types of graphics or ways of packing more into less space. I have sometimes thought of the perfect console or perfect game, but every time there are limitless ways to make it better – a bigger screen, more controller slots, better visuals etc.

Callum Calvert, Windsor

Intel boffins say that by 2018 they will have hit the physical limit of processor miniaturisation, and no further advances will be possible using current technology. Anyway, however powerful the consoles become, you just know that people will only use them to play new* FIFA *games. How d'you like them apples? Ed

'Mirror the price'

I have always bought Nintendo consoles and the **NGC**/N64/Super Play magazine. I got a bit bored one weekend and dug out those ageing Super Play and N64 mags. I noticed that each new generation of mag increased in price by 35%. This figure seems to mirror the price of the Nintendo console of the day. It's not going to be long before many Nintendo fans can't afford to buy new consoles.

Peter Hodgson, St Helens

But the SNES cost £150 at launch, the N64 was £250 and the Gamecube just £130. Somebody didn't pay attention in maths lessons… Ed



'Bloated jack'

I'm not going to get into the old argument about which *Mario Kart* is better, as you've probably received hundreds of letters like that already.

Bonus Letters

My bank did not allow me to take out more than £100 a day.
David Gillespie, London
Time to find a new bank, perhaps. Ed

I have decided not to bombard you with games reviews.
Peter Titcombe, via email
And for that I am exceedingly grateful. Ed

I don't have enough organs to sell to get all the games I want.
Tristan Gaskell, Devon
I'll give you 75p for your brain. Ed

My misfortune is another man's laughing fit.
James Batchelor, Chelmsford
Ho ho ho. Ed

Yet again you rant.
Erik de Jong, Netherlands
Yes, and what are you going to do about it, cheeseboy? Ed

Would it help if I wrote an entire letter of evil laughter, because I can do that too.
Dave Challis, via email
Please don't. Ed

But… I can take the inclusion of two characters in place of one, I can take the removal of the banana-skin foiling brake and the inability to hold a shell or banana behind you. I can even take the corruption of Yoshi from a speedy and agile sprinter to the bloated jack-of-all-trades middleweight that he now is. But why, Nintendo? Why did you get rid of that big fish at the award ceremony? Replacing it with a bunch of wobbly, grass-skirt-wearing idiots from *Super Mario Sunshine* is just one change too far.

P.S. I still say that *MK64* is the best, if only for the glory that is Wario Stadium. And don't harp on to me about its Battle mode – they've all sucked!

Steve Brown, via email

I like fish. Ed



'Skin that ruin'

Is it just me or do all the battle arenas in *Mario Kart* seem too small? It's a great game no doubt, but it's the little things such as that plus the lack of shortcuts and not being able to hop over annoyances like a banana skin that ruin it for me. I know I'm not the only one with these feelings towards the game. Just thought I'd speak my mind instead of doing things that I'd later regret to take out my frustration.

Patrick Scully, Galway

Have a chat with the previous correspondent. Battle modes always suck, apparently. Ed

'Frankly ridiculous'

After reading the comparison between the SNES, N64 and GC versions of *Mario Kart* in issue 88 I have to say that I disagree. I think the SNES version is far superior. *Double Dash* feels like all of the tracks are covered in ice. Fair enough, this can be



HONOURABLE MENTIONS
Thanks to everyone who wrote in this month, including (but not limited to): Yonatan Lee, via email; James Lockwood, via email; Curtis McGlinchey, Brentwood; Gavin Bradley, via email; Alex White, Bristol; Oliver Radini, via email; Bent Eigil Sumelius, Norway; Richard McIntosh, via email; Chris Bevan, Shrewsbury; Adam Mander, Bradford on Avon; Ted Oliver, Chester; Michael Fenton, Livingston; David Gillespie, London; Ben Swanson, via email; Michael Newton, Welwyn Garden City; Alex Peck, Sheffield; Paul Davison, Sedgefield; James Partridge, via email; James Hamilton, Hoddesdon; Laurie Havelock, via email; Anton-Jari Desai-Paulden, Bristol; Calum

compensated for by learning how to powerslide, but nonetheless the controls are less responsive than they should be. Then there are the individual weapons – I'm sorry, but the size of Bowser's shell is frankly ridiculous, and the weapons in general seem to be more accommodating to poor players.

This is a real departure from previous games where driving prowess was seemingly more important to secure victory. I have more gripes but I'm starting to witter on. *Double Dash* is good, but it could have been better.
Calum Stevenson, via email

It's definitely more accommodating to poor players, which is why we've had much more variety in the results of multiplayer races and consequently more people wanting to get involved. Swings and roundabouts. Ed

'Chimpanzee haters'

I'd just like to ask what in hell is wrong with Diddy Kong being in *Mario Kart*? You say he doesn't deserve to be in the game but you have no problem with Petey Piranha or the never-before-heard-of 'Toadette'. Explain yourselves, you chimpanzee haters.
John, Ireland

It's all because of a shameful episode a few years ago involving Diddy Kong and Paul's mum. Ed

'Crummy fourth'

I would like to comment on your *Mario Kart* review. I believe you are incorrect with one of the terms in your statements: 'random'.

In my experience, the AI is not random. It is quite the opposite: fixed. This is especially evident in the 100cc and 150cc classes, because over the championship the results for each race are practically the same. Let's say I did pretty naff and finished mid-table in one of the cups: Diddy and DK would come first in each race, Mario and Peach second, and possibly Bowser and Junior third.

These are just examples, however, but the prospect of competing against the same top three is very discouraging. I am not saying *Mario Kart* is crap, because it isn't – it's class. I just think there is too much reliance on weapons. It has been on numerous occasions that I've been in first place for 90% of a race and then a volley of shells, bombs, eggs, lighting and so on, would leave me in a crummy fourth or fifth place. This is extremely frustrating and very unnecessary.
Lee Machin, Manchester

When we said 'random' we were referring to the way you can be denied victory no matter how well you drive. But that's just how Mario Kart has always worked. If the fastest driver always won every race then it would be as dull as any ordinary multiplayer racing game, and if the computer didn't occasionally bend you over and give you a spanking then you'd win every Grand Prix race with tedious regularity. Ed



Bonus Letters

What's fat, slimy and smells of peach?
Lewis Smith, Leeds
Very funny, but sadly unprintable. Ed

I am a long Nintendo fan.
David Fearnside, Doncaster
No need to brag. Ed

Everyone comes to me asking me what games they should buy. I'm even making a profit by selling my advice.
Daniel Todesco, via email
Well, it works for me. Ed

I would like my photo to be removed if that is the case.
Ben Case, via email
No, you are the case. The Ben case. Ed

Make a half-man half-woman Enjiki, then everyone's happy.
Alex Gray, Kent
Already been done. Ed

I am glad I have got that over with.
Tom Armstrong, Hartlepool
Me too. Ed

I bet more than half you gaming guys out there would be smoked if you ever faced me.
Lisa Needham, Sheffield
Form an orderly queue, chaps. Ed

What's long, slimy and smells like daisy?
Lewis Smith, Leeds
You horrible, horrible little man. Ed

'Puke-spewing'

While surfing the net the other day, I found a car manufacturer called 'Delfino'. Now I sat there and thought, where have I heard this before? Then it clicked: *Mario Sunshine!* I think it probably would have been better if Mario could ride one of these around the island instead of a puke-spewing Yoshi.
Gianni Spagnoli, Enfield

But does the car come with red shells as standard? Ed

'Not girly'

In response to Roxanne Chan's letter in issue 88, games with pretty, fluffy stuff that look like they're aimed at seven-year-olds *are* aimed at seven-year-olds, not girls.

You complain about the lack of games aimed at girls – where are the games aimed at boys? The likes of *Wind Waker* are hardly 'boyish' games, but they're not girly either. There are very few games aimed at one sex or the other.
Mark Nisbet, Galston

So you're saying that* Medal Of Honor, FIFA, Hitman, Lord Of The Rings, Soul Calibur, Enter The Matrix, Rogue Squadron, F-Zero *and hundreds of others like them aren't aimed primarily at blokes? I've yet to see any ladies getting excited over* Rising Sun. *Ed



△ Trust us, it doesn't appeal to most females. Oddly, footie management sims do...

'Weekly basis'

I'm worried about the lifespan of Gamecube. N64 was in bad shape and lasted for around five years. Gamecube is in great shape, but it has barely been out for a year and a half, and they're talking about N5. I'm worried that N5 will follow this trend and live for around six months before N6 is announced. Sooner or later they will be announcing next-gen consoles on a weekly basis. What games can come out in this time scale, Game & Watch remakes?
Joel Mayner, London

If they really are working on N5 right now, and aiming to release it as quickly as they claim



CORRECTION CORNER

Now since when has *Spyro Enter the Dragonfly* been about a 'panting pot-bellied, totally rubbish space assassin.' That's what you said in issue 88's Directory. Or was that meant to be *Star Wars Bounty Hunter*. Yes, that fits better doesn't it?
Thomas Creek, North Yorkshire

Even then I'm not sure it fits all that well. Ed

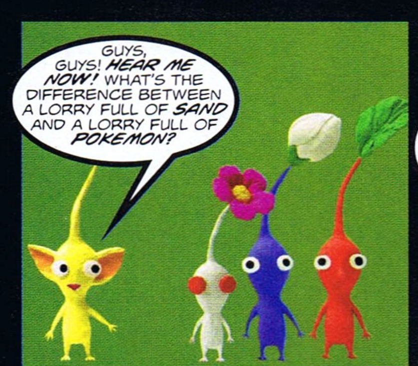
In issue 88's *Mario Kart* review you opened with a picture of the *Double Dash* stars but something's wrong. Is it just me or is Luigi's logo on his hat actually falling off? And underneath that one is Waluigi's sign. *Evil!*
Ross Parry, Middlesbrough

Evil indeed. Ed

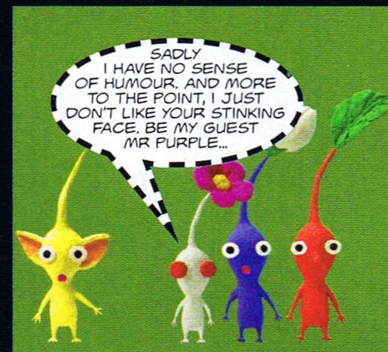
Nicolson, Glasgow; Simon Mason, Bournemouth; Anthony Darke, Devon; William Felstead, Bexleyheath; Mark Mina, Essex; Phil Young, Belfast; Lynne Robertson, Aberdeen; Jason Newport, Christchurch; Boundary House, Moulton; Christian Moore, Ipswich; Carl Philip Lund, Norway; Levi Holta, Norway; Neil Holmes, Doncaster; Marc Middleton, Sudbury; Daniel Rouse, High Wycombe; Marc Middleton, Sudbury; Lee Baron, via email; Ingvar Gausden, Lancaster; Mark Weeks, Solihull; Dean Hailstone, Jarrow; James Hamilton, Herts; Mel Taylor, Cheltenham; Richard Mortensen, Norway; Adam Field, Worcester; Jason Sharpe, Milton Keynes; Declan Gillespie, London; Rob Thomas, Herts; and too many others to mention. Keep on writing, folks!

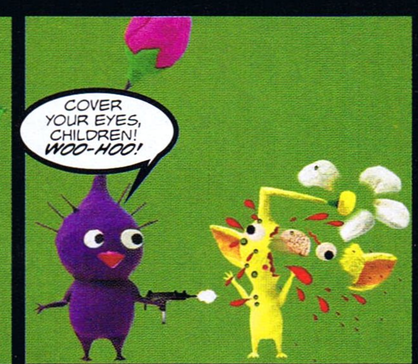
Grintendo!

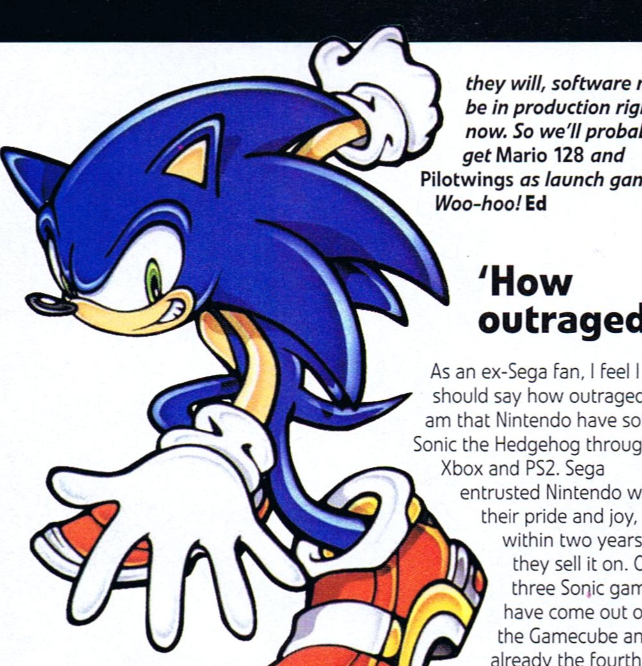
GOT A NINTENDO-RELATED JOKE TO TELL US? GREAT! SEND IT IN, BUT IF MR WHITE DOESN'T LIKE IT HE'LL TAKE OUT HIS ANGER ON POOR YELLOW, AND IT'LL ALL BE YOUR FAULT. MAKE HIM LAUGH AND YOU WIN A GAME. *THIS MONTH:* 'JOKE' INFLICTED BY RICHARD CHAPLIN.











they will, software must be in production right now. So we'll probably get Mario 128 **and** Pilotwings **as launch games. Woo-hoo! Ed**

'How outraged'

As an ex-Sega fan, I feel I should say how outraged I am that Nintendo have sold Sonic the Hedgehog through to Xbox and PS2. Sega entrusted Nintendo with their pride and joy, and within two years, they sell it on. Only three Sonic games have come out on the Gamecube and already the fourth, *Sonic Heroes*, has been sold on. I think Nintendo have made a big mistake.
Matthew Duffell, Chorley

What? Nintendo never owned Sonic at all. Sega can make their games for whoever they like, and they've decided to make games for PS2 and Xbox as well as Gamecube. Ed



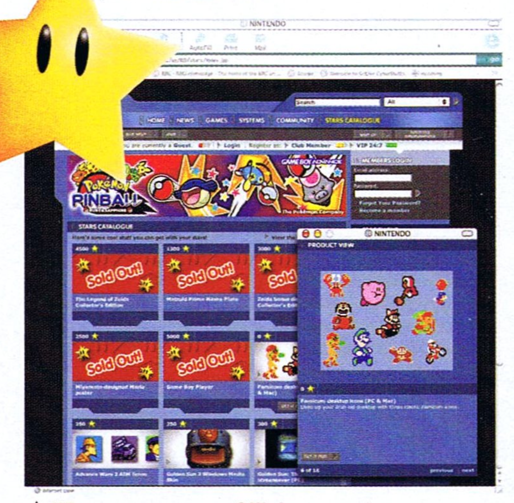
Δ Sonic belongs to Sega, not Nintendo. This information may come as a great shock to you.

'Precious stars'

Since I wasn't aware that Wavebirds and suchlike were available from the Stars Catalogue, I decided to waste all of my hard-earned stars on the only half-decent thing they had – screensavers.

Bad idea. This is one of the greatest gaming-related tragedies I've ever experienced. (No, I've never had my memory card wiped.) The screensaver, which was apparently compatible with Macintosh, didn't work on Mac OS version 10 or above. I downloaded the screensaver, and, after parting with my precious stars, decided to get a couple of extra screensavers before trying them out. I now have hardly any stars, and I wasted them on completely worthless junk. I would have emailed Nintendo and demanded a refund, but I couldn't be bothered because it's hard enough just to find the front page.
Alex Birch, via email

As a Mac user you should be well used to having trouble finding any software for your machine. Ed



Δ What more can we say? We keep warning you about this sort of thing, and you don't listen...

SO TELL ME THIS...

Ghouls 'n' Ghosts is a classic side-scroller. Will we ever see it on the Gamecube or GBA? Please say yes.
Ross Penhey , Bath

Pop down to your local game shop, where you'll find it's already available for GBA.

This may seem like the stupidest question you've ever received, but how much would a go-kart cost?
Dominic Egan, Leigh-on-Sea

Upwards of £1,200, I'm afraid.

1. Any chance of a new *Hybrid Heaven*? It's the most underrated game on N64, and there would be a chance to improve the niggly bits when it comes to Gamecube.
2. Any chance of *Shinobi* coming to Gamecube?
3. Will all the old *Mario Party* games be released for Gamecube, sort of like the new *Zelda* bonus disc?
4. Will there be a *Castlevania* game for Gamecube?
5. Will there be a *Mission: Impossible* sequel?
6. I'd love to see *Sim City* and *Paperboy* updates. Any chance of these?

R.Steele, South Yorkshire

1. No. It sold like rotten eggs.
2. Unlikely.
***3. Probably not, since they're basically the same as the current* Mario Party 5.**
4. Nope.
5. Are you sure you really want one?
6.* Paperboy *seems dead and buried since the unsuccessful N64 version and* Sim City *has outgrown home consoles.

1. Are there going to be any real-time strategy games out for the Gamecube?
2. *Need For Speed Underground* or *Burnout 2*?
3. Is there going to be another *Hitman* game?
4. Do you need the Game Boy version of *Splinter Cell* to link up with the Gamecube? If so, is it worth it?

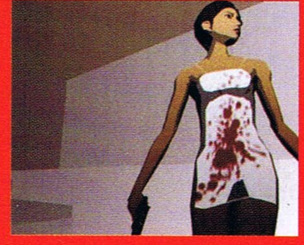
Serhan Handani, Southampton

1. Yes –* Goblin Commander*, for one.
2.* Burnout 2*, without a shadow of a doubt.
3. Yes.* Hitman 3 *is in the works but there's no news on which platforms it will be converted to.
4. You get a simple radar and a remote bomb gadget if you don't have the Game Boy version, or some extra levels for the GBA game. It's worth it if you genuinely like both the GBA and GC versions.

I've just bought a second-hand N64 with *GoldenEye* and *Banjo-Kazooie*. Can you recommend a good selection of the next best games I should try to find?
James Douglas, London

Go for* Perfect Dark, Mario 64, Pilotwings, Lylat Wars, Mario Tennis, Blast Corps, Jet Force Gemini *and the two* Zelda *games, if you haven't got them on Gamecube. They all stand the test of time.





KILLER 7

The darkest game to hit Nintendo's console. We'll let you know *exactly* how Shinji Mikami's stylish, bloody nightmare plays…





CAPCOM SUPER CLASH!

RESIDENT EVIL 4



Exclusive shots and brand new details of the distressing Gamecube-only sequel. Brains never tasted so good.

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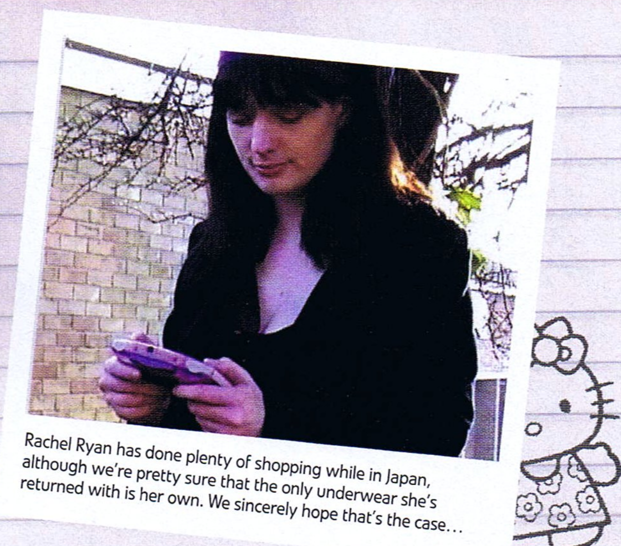
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LEARNING JAPANESE

From squeaking along with J-pop to bar service in eight easy steps…

When you go to Japan, there are some things that you really need to know – no, not rubbish like buying food or finding accommodation, you can do without that. No, what you really want to know is how to purchase consoles and what to look out for if you're after a bargain or something rare…



Rachel Ryan has done plenty of shopping while in Japan, although we're pretty sure that the only underwear she's returned with is her own. We sincerely hope that's the case…

VIDEOGAMES SAY THE FUNNIEST THINGS…

Japanese: アイドル

Reading: A I DO RU

Meaning: From the English word, 'idol'. This is generally used to refer to a singer or actor with no discernible talent, famous because people are told that they're famous. Aidoru used to be a very Japanese concept and a dead clever thing to say that only cyberpunk writer William Gibson understood, until the advent of reality TV and Gareth Gates.

Japanese: ガチャポン

Reading: GA CHA PO N

Meaning: Gacha are the corporation whose name has become synonymous with the toy dispensers that they manufacture. The word comes from onomatopoeia, gacha being the sound of cranking the handle, and 'pon', the toy comes out. In England Gacha machines can be found dispensing Winnie the Pooh and Rugrats toys in some of the larger Sainsbury's, but in Tokyo there are entire shops devoted to them where they are stacked from floor to ceiling. They also appear in *Smash Brothers*, *Shenmue* and *Phantasy Star Online 3.*

Japanese: プリクラ

Reading: PU RI KU RA

Meaning: Short for 'Print Club.' Denotes those photo-sticker booths which stand in student union buildings and bellow "YOU CAN TAKE A PICTURE OF YOUR FACE AND PRINT IT ON SMALL STICKERS! SAY CHEESE!" every 15 seconds. Attaching pictures of your face to things is still enormously popular in Japan, but less so in England since SNK became Playmore.

Japanese: 一時間

Hiragana: いちじかん

Reading: I CHI JI KAN

Meaning: One hour. An absolutely invaluable phrase to know if you need to use an internet cafe, a karaoke parlour or… er… nope, can't think of anything else which charges by the hour…

Japanese: 中古

Hiragana: ちゅうこ

Reading: CHU U KO

Meaning: Secondhand. If you ever go to Japan, learn these kanjis. They're the pointers for any self-respecting bargain hunter. And, fact fans, trading in secondhand goods requires a special licence in Japan. Even if you're flogging dirty laundry. Prosecutions for unlicenced knicker-pushing have been known…

Japanese: ユーフォ

Reading: YU U FO

Meaning: UFO. A UFO catcher is like one of our traditional seaside toy-grabbing claw games. Remember those, the things where you spend half your holiday money trying to win a stuffed toy or watch worth about 50p? However, the Japanese machines have one vital difference – you can actually win with these sods. As with Gatchapon, the toys are always exclusives which are not available in the shops so you can make a few sponds trading and selling them. Japanese gifts just keep on giving.

Japanese: 本体

Hiragana ほんたい

Reading: HON TA I

Meaning: Literally means 'the original', but in the case of videogames refers to consoles themselves. If you ask for Gamecube in a shop, you'll most likely just be directed to the games – you need to ask for a Gamecube Hontai if you want to buy the machine.

Japanese: 同人誌

Hiragana: どうじんし

Reading: DO U JIN SHI

Meaning: A fan-made comic or fanzine. Dojinshi exist for the same reason that fan fiction exists on the net – to make real every scenario you could possibly visualise your favourite characters from games, cartoons or movies getting into. The most popular seem to involve Mario, Samus and Harry Potter doing things that'd make a mucky movie star blush red…

Japanese: 同人ソフト

Hiragana: どうじんソフト

Reading: DO U JIN SOFUTO

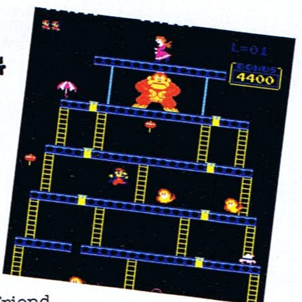
Meaning: Unofficial fan-made games, sofuto being short for software. A popular example of dojin-soft is crossover fighting games – *Smash Brothers*-style stuff where characters from loads of games go at it. There are entire shops devoted to them and nobody ever seems to sue.

THE EVOLUTION OF...

KONG



The question is, which one in the series is the missing link?

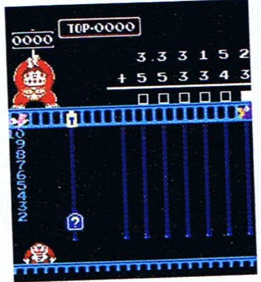


1 DONKEY KONG

The arcade original and the following Famicom version of everyone's favourite barrel-hurling great ape both appeared in 1981. Donkey'd only gone and taken a girl called Pauline to the top of a building. Would her plumber boyfriend leave it alone? No.

2 DONKEY KONG JR

A whole year passed before the release of the arcade sequel (what took Ninty so long? Look at it...) This time, the ape had been locked up by the plumber. You got to control DK's son (not to be confused with Diddy – he has a tail, see...), who had to clamber up vines and avoid Snapjaws in order to reach his caged old fella.



3 DONKEY KONG JR MATH

Another year passed, then the game we were waiting for became available for the Famicom in Japan. And what fun it was! Solve equations by climbing up chains! Climb around the screen to find numbers that equal the number in DK's hands! Win... an apple! Brilliant. Or not.



4 DONKEY KONG 3

In 1984, the threequel hit arcades and the Famicom. Played... like the original, really (a stream of tweaked sequels isn't the preserve of present-day gaming, see...) It was after this game that Nintendo retired DK from public duties, letting him out to play a number of 'bit-parts', the highlight being...

5 SUPER MARIO KART

...this. DK became the fat man of choice – heavy, with slow acceleration but a hint of nutty top speed. He stank the place out with his rotten bananas, upsetting the citizens of Mushroom Kingdom. They banished him to an isolated island, but he still KEEPS COMING BACK.



6 DONKEY KONG COUNTRY

Rare re-invented Donkey Kong a decade ago, with the release of their Advanced Computer Modelling (ACM) fuelled SNES platformer. The beautifully realised graphics (unthinkable before then), the crisp handling and tag-team play created an army of new fans. And now you can play it on Game Boy. Unreal...



7 DONKEY KONG COUNTRY TV SHOW

Back in '98, the dream became reality – a CG cartoon starring the stinking ape! God bless you Teletoon Canada and your 40-episode strong series! We can now die happy. Really.



8 DONKEY KONG 64

The year: 1999. The console: N64. The point: Explore DK's huge 3D world as one of five members of the Kong family, swapping between them to take advantage of their individual abilities. Damn dirty apes...



NGC TOP 10

'INTERACTIVE' RHYTHM ACTION GAMES THAT'LL NEVER APPEAR ON GAMECUBE

1 MARIO'S GRAND PIANO
Full-size plastic baby grand, complete with sheet music on disc. Suitable for 4-6-year olds.

2 OCARINA OH NO! OUTTA TIME
Pipe on the official Nintendo Ocarina until your lungs fold.

3 P DIDDY KONG
Junior monkey rap-'em-up. 'Kiddies' use a microphone to make Diddy Kong chant hip-hop classics.

4 PEACH BEACH PARTY
Singalong at the Mushroom Kingdom Beach Barbecue. Compatible with Diddymic™.

5 FOX ROCKS!
Novelty guitar-based shoot-'em-up. Pluck the strings on the Yngwie Malmsteen-approved PlastoStrat™ to fire.

6 PIKACHU'S PICCOLO
'Stop making me fight – make music with my yellow piccolo!' (Comes with yellow piccolo.)

7 BOWSER 'BOUT THAT?
Make Bowser dance for your pleasure by simply dancing for his! In front of his SHELLcam™!

8 TOAD IN A HOLE
Oddball adventure. Warn tiny Toad of danger by rubbing on a five-inch rubber mushroom.

9 WHACK OFF WALUIGI
Hit Waluigi off 24 man-made structures using the NinClub™. Jools Holland provides music.

10 DONKEY WONGA
Pointlessly cash-free gambling machine sim. No rhythm element at all. Utter cack.

TOP SECRET
NOT FOR RELEASE UNTIL E3 2004

Nintendo



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SO I CAN GET MY HANDS ON THESE.



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